

Get the scoop on strawberries to get the most flavor for your money.

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Liu Shaochuang says his solo expeditions are no more risky than riding a bicycle.

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Reports earlier this week of Bill Gates' demise were greatly exaggerated.

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# BEIJING TODAY

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## Number of SARS Cases Falls

China's efforts to curb Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) have resulted in a rising number of recovered patients and a drop in new cases, Public Health Minister Zhang Wenkang said at a press conference in Beijing yesterday.

As of March 31, 1,190 SARS patients had been reported in China's mainland areas, 46 of whom have died, Zhang said. Of these, 1,153 cases and 40 deaths have occurred in Guangdong Province.

Of the patients, 934 have fully recovered and been discharged from hospital, while another 210 remain hospitalized.

Twelve people have been infected in Beijing, however, the disease has now been controlled.

Guangdong reported 47 percent fewer new cases in March than in February, with 507 more recovered patients discharged from hospital, while the number of deaths also dropped sharply, the minister said.

He added that the origin of the disease has yet to be identified, and that there has been no scientific evidence establishing Guangdong as the source, though the first SARS cases were reported in the province.

Following the outbreak of SARS, the WHO dispatched experts to China on three separate occasions at the invitation of the Chinese government.

Zhang quoted some WHO experts as saying that China's experience in controlling atypical pneumonia is very useful for other countries.

WHO experts arrived in Guangdong yesterday morning for further cooperation with Chinese experts in curbing SARS, the minister said.

He said effective measures have been taken to bring the epidemic under control and to ensure that foreign visitors in China will not be infected.

According to him, the central and local disease control departments have stipulated a number of methods, criterion and guidelines for the treatment and prevention of SARS.

(Xinhua)



## China Lends Hand to Iraqi Refugees

By Ema Ma

The first shipment of humanitarian aid sent by the Chinese government to Iraqi refugees in Jordan arrived in Amman, on Wednesday, *Xinhua* News Agency reported.

The aid package includes 100 tents, each four meters long, three meters wide and 2.5 meters high.

China is one of the first nations to provide humanitarian aid following the start of the war in Iraq and has made great efforts to do so quickly, according to Ministry of Commerce official Xia Yungui. The Chinese government pledged to provide humanitarian aid to the Iraqi refugees on March 22, two days after the start of the war.

The remaining 400 tents will be sent to Jordan in batches early this month, Xia said.

The China Red Cross Society (CRCS) announced last Saturday it will donate US \$100,000 worth of humanitarian aid to Iraqi refugees, according to *Xinhua* news. Half of that donation will go to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the other half to the International Committee of the Red Cross.

*Xinhua* also reported Monday that \$240,900 has been donated under the initiative of the Chinese magazine *World Vision* to construct two new schools in Afghanistan.

The schools will be specifically targeted at children orphaned by the war in Afghanistan. The money has been channeled to the Chinese Embassy in Afghanistan, according to a CRCS spokesman in Guangzhou, Guangdong Province.

▲ Fifteen kilometers southeast of Baghdad, this man's wife and three children were killed during a US-British airstrike. (Xinhua Photo)

## WAR in IRAQ

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▼ Anti-War Demonstration in Beijing Sunday, Page 5 Photo by Cheng Tielang



## Hong Kong Actor Commits Suicide

By Sun Ming

Acclaimed actor and pop star Leslie Cheung committed suicide by jumping from the 24th floor of the Hong Kong Mandarin Oriental Hotel on Tuesday night.

A spokesman for the Hong Kong police con-



firmed that Cheung died at 7:06 pm in the Queen Mary Hospital.

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## How Green is Your Cemetery?

By Chen Ying

Public cemeteries have seen growing numbers of visitors since mid March. The numbers will peak tomorrow, which is Qingming, or Tomb Sweeping Day, according to China's lunar calendar.

A tradition dating back to Han Dynasty, people pay their respects to departed relatives on or around this day every year. And every year, the debate about using scarce land resources for the burial of the dead is resur-

rected. Fan Ying, a Guangdong-based scholar suggests that changes need to be made to burial practices as a matter of urgency. Fan, president of the Guangdong Spiritual Civilization Society, said last week that interring the ashes of the dead and marking the spot with a tree was a better alternative. This method can conserve both land and money, as well as protect the environment.

At the business hall of Babaoshan Cemetery, Beijing's largest cemetery, receptionists were busy with burial enquiries Wednesday morning. The cost of an urn ranges from 700 to 1,200 yuan, *Beijing Today* learned.

Family members can have the urn containing the ashes of their loved one placed in Huaisi Hall for 50 years at a cost of 500 yuan. For 1,500 yuan per square meter, they can rent a small plot of land for 20 years in which to bury the ashes. But this option also requires a tombstone, which will cost anywhere from 12,000 to 70,000 yuan.

Although Chairman Mao and other leaders called on the people of China to renounce the custom of burial of the dead in favor of cremation in 1956, burial is still the preferred method of disposing of the remains of loved ones for many.

"I believe most people now still want to be buried under the earth according to Chinese tradition — even after cremation," a 65-year-old man surnamed Li told *Beijing Today*. Li and his wife visited his mother's grave at Babaoshan Cemetery on Wednesday morning. He said visiting the grave was a way of expressing respect for the dead. He spent almost 14,000 yuan on the grave in November 1999.

More than 70 thousand people die every year in Beijing, according to the civil affairs department. That number will reach

100 thousand in 2010, a result of the ageing population. According to local government regulations, the area of a grave should be no greater than one square meter. But a report issued by *Beijing Youth Daily* last year reveals that the average grave occupies 2.7 square meters.

Beijing's total cemetery area is about 450 hectares, almost half of which has been occupied. On current estimates, this area will be used up within 70 years.

To use the space efficiently, the government advocates people place the ashes of their relatives in the halls, walls, corridors and pagodas provided for this purpose in the cemeteries.

"There are a lot of ways to properly deal with the ashes of the deceased. Unfortunately, people in some cities and the countryside continue to practice what amounts to full burial," says Fan Ying.

"Planting a tree over the ashes may be the best way of dealing with them," Fan says, "The tree will become a symbol of the deceased for the living, while it's also an environmentally friendly practice."

Taiyuan, capital of Shanxi Province, has been promoting this form of burial in its eight public cemeteries since 1995, while Zhejiang Province started doing so in 2001. But people tend to be slow to change their customs in relation to such sensitive issues as the burial of a loved one.

"I think burial of this kind is a good way. At least, people can find a place to mourn their departed family members, while doing good to the environment," said 33-year-old Sun Feng, who was accompanying her mother to visit her grandfather and grandmother's grave at Babaoshan Cemetery Wednesday morning. "The civil affairs department should understand the huge advantage of this form of burial and support it with proper policies," says Fan.

EDITOR: LI XIN DESIGNER: LI SHI

## New Long Marchers Reach Half Way Mark

By Xiao Rong

Andy McEwen and Ed Jocelyn are now in south China's Guizhou Province. On Tuesday, the Guizhou Tourism Bureau bestowed on the duo the title "Image Ambassadors of the Red Army Trail."

The two set out from Yudu, Jiangxi last October on a 368-day expedition to retrace the entire route of the Red Army's Long March. *Beijing Today* caught up with them in Guizhou's capital, Guiyang.



After over three months of trekking through the wilds of Guizhou, one of the eight provinces and two autonomous regions the marchers plan to pass through, the two were making the most of their relatively luxurious three-star hotel apartment, provided courtesy of the local tourism bureau.

"We walk around small county towns just like peasants and get very excited about the progress," says McEwen. "I now understand

why Chinese people have to first pursue material comforts."

Jocelyn and McEwen both maintain it is not helpful to define a place only in terms of its people. "People are just people, we should judge them according to their merits, not according to where they come from," says Jocelyn.

Most of the local people the two have met along their way have greeted them with friendship and openness, allowing the new Long Marchers to "build up a picture of the way people live" and "connect

with the common humanity."

So much so that the two have often found the need to keep on the move a frustrating disruption of their experiencing the real spirit of the Long March.

"It takes time for people to open up their minds, the more we communicate, the more we might learn about their family or local history," says Jocelyn. "It's really disappointing that we have to keep walking in order to open the door to more experiences."

► Continued on page 2



# Local Government Mouthpieces Debut

By Shan Jinliang / Zhang Hongjin

Since late last month, the capital government has been working to set up a new spokesperson system for all local districts, counties and judicial departments. The first district-level spokesman, Yü Jun from Haidian District, held his first public press conference last Thursday.

In early January, the municipal government issued a regulation for the establishment of up a spokesperson system covering all local districts, counties, departments, offices and bureaus, with the intention of creating a channel for consistent and unified authorized news releases. The first such spokespersons, for

the city's Personnel Bureau and Bureau of Public Security, made their debuts in early February.

The regulation stipulates spokespersons must be top officials or directors. News office with contact officers will also be established in all districts, counties, offices and bureaus to assist the

spokespeople.

To date, all district and county-level spokespersons have been selected. Yü, also the vice director of Haidian District, said at his first press release, "This kind of spokesperson system is common overseas. Our district government will hold at least one press release per month."

# End in Sight to Sky-High Land Prices in Zhongguancun

By Ema Ma

The hyper-inflated prices of land in the Zhongguancun area of Haidian District, called China's "Silicon Valley," are about to get the axe. Yü Jun, the district's spokesman, announced last Thursday that the Haidian government will impose a price ceiling of 300,000 yuan per mu (one fifteenth of a hectare) for land intended for use in the development of high technology and advanced manufacturing.

At the time of the announcement, land in the Zhongguancun Software Park was selling for as much as 1.1 million yuan per mu.

The Haidian government's land holding institution will be responsible for achieving balance in the local real estate market by directly controlling land development instead of turning it over to developers.

"The price for some lots will decrease by an average of 60 percent," said Zhang Feihu, deputy director of the Haidian Land Resources Bureau.

"The government has worked out concrete measures to eliminate profit margins on land sales," Zhang told *Beijing Today*. "One is to cut related taxes and charges, such as abolishing original farm land occupation charges. The government will also subsidize land used for industry with the profits gained from land developed for tourism, condominiums and other commercial facilities."

Besides the software park, Zhongguancun is also home to the Life Science Park, Shangdi Information Industry Base and other technology-oriented areas. However, astronomical land prices sparked by market disorder have frightened off many hi-tech startups.

To date, 16 square kilometers of land in Haidian District has been zoned for industrial development. According to Zhang, further space can be made available at favorable prices for certain companies, such as Fortune Global 500 firms, through individual negotiations.

# Japan Extends Loan as Overall Aid Drops

By Ema Ma

China's Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi and Japanese Ambassador to China Anami Koreshige signed an exchange of notes, a kind of general contract, last Friday in Beijing regarding the extension of an aid loan from the Japanese government to the Chinese government this year.

The loan will come from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation, a government-run financial institution.

According to releases from Japan's long-running Economic Cooperation Program for China, loans totaling 121 billion Japanese yen (over 8.4 billion yuan) will be extended for use in eight projects. Interest rates will range from 0.75 percent to 2.2 percent and repayment periods will be 30 to 40 years.

Of all the funds, 71 percent will go towards six environment protection proj-

ects, 23 percent to a personnel training project and the rest towards the development of the country's central and western areas.

Japan's official aid to China has dropped 24.9 percent this year compared to the same period of last year, and fell 24.7 last year from the year before.

Megata Shuichiro, the Minister for Economic Affairs of the Japanese Embassy, said at the signing ceremony that the Japanese government has cut its loans to overseas countries by half this year due to the slowdown of the country's economy. The loans to China are the largest of any currently extended by Japan to a developing country.

China's Ministry of Finance and the Japan Bank for International Cooperation signed a detailed agreement for the loans on a project-by-project basis on Monday.

# Taiwan Flight Crosses Over Mainland

By Ema Ma

Taiwan-based China Airlines' flight No. CI-065, bound for Amsterdam, Holland, crossed the airspace of the Chinese mainland last Thursday night. The flight, which originated in Taipei, was the first Taiwanese plane ever to make such a crossing.

In the past, all flights from Taiwan to Europe were routed through the Middle East. However, due to safety concerns caused by the war in Iraq, China Airlines received approval from the Civil Aviation Administration of China (CAAC) one day before the flight to change to a Central Asia and Eastern Europe route, using an emergency air channel that crossed the Chinese mainland cities of Kunming, Chengdu, Lanzhou and Urumqi.

China Airlines also flew the first cross-Straits indirect charter flight during Spring Festival in January.

According to estimates from China Airlines, a permitted mainland-crossing route would cut the round-trip travel time between Taiwan and Frankfurt by 2.8 hours and reduce costs by \$1.68 million each year. Such a route would also clip 3.9 hours from round-trip flights between Taipei and Rome and lead to annual savings of \$1.05 million for the airline.

On March 21, Pu Zhaozhou, the director of the CAAC's Taiwan Affairs Office, said the Chinese mainland would like to provide satisfactory services to Taiwan's airlines and he welcomed Taiwanese companies to apply to mainland authorities for permission for such routes as soon as possible.

The same day as China Air's historic flight, another Taiwan-based carrier, Eva Air, received approval from the CAAC to cross mainland airspace.

# Mail to Gulf Suspended

By Ema Ma

Last Monday, China Post announced the suspension of ordinary mail service to Iraq and Kuwait, a result of the cancellation of all flights to the Middle East since the beginning of the war in Iraq.

International delivery firm TNT Holdings, China Post's partner for overseas express mail solutions, has broken off mid-speed mail deliveries, effectively halting such service to Iraq and Kuwait for the time being.

According to the announcement, because it is all but impossible to predict when the war will end, any mail China Post receives addressed to the Gulf will be returned to sender.

Regarding when postal service to the two countries will resume, China Post said in the announcement that customers will have to wait for further notification. The announcement also warned customers to expect delays in express delivery services to the Gulf area.



Yao Ming in action

Xinhua Photo

# Yao Ming Up for Laureus Newcomer Award

By Hou Mingxin

Chinese basketball player Yao Ming is in the running for a 2003 Laureus World Sports Award, announced the Laureus World Sports Academy at a press conference held last Friday in Shanghai.

Yao was named one of the five nominees for the Laureus World Newcomer of the Year Award.

So far this season, the Chinese rookie center has scored 25 double-doubles in 70 games for the Houston Rockets of the US' National Basketball Association (NBA). In February, the 22-year-old became the first rookie to start in the NBA All-Star game in eight years.

Formula One world champion Michael Schumacher, top golfer Tiger Woods, Brazilian soccer star Ronaldo, Norway's Olympic biathlon champion Ole Einar Bjoerndalen and Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong are the nominees for the Laureus World Sportsman of the Year Award.

Record-breaking athletes Marion Jones and Paula Radcliffe are in the race for the Laureus World Sportswoman of the Year Award, along with Swedish golfer Annika Sorenstam, Olympic alpine skiing champion Janica Kostelic and tennis star Serena Williams, who currently holds all four grand slam tennis titles.

Nominees for the 2002 Team of the Year Award are soccer world champions Brazil, European football champions Real Madrid, Olympic ice hockey champion Canada, Formula One's Ferrari team and Europe's Ryder Cup-winning golf squad.

The nominees were selected by more than 400 sports journalists from 75 countries. The winners of the "Oscars of the sports world" will be announced on May 20 in Monte Carlo.

# Bus Attack Leaves 19 Chinese Dead in Kyrgyzstan

According to the Xinhua News Agency, early last Thursday morning, an international long-distance regular bus belonging to a transportation company based in Xinjiang, northwest China, was attacked by armed bandits before the vehicle was set afire 260 kilometers from Bishkek, the capital of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Shortly after the incident, officials from the Chinese Embassy in Kyrgyzstan rushed to the scene, finding 21 dead passengers on the bus, including 19 Chinese citizens. The bus had set out from Bishkek and was set for Kashgar in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.

Chinese Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan Hong Jiuyin held an emergency meeting last Friday with officials from the Foreign Ministry of the Kyrgyz Republic, demanding the Kyrgyz side take all possible measures to find the cause of the accident and apprehend those involved, while keeping the Chinese side informed of the progress of the investigation.

President of Kyrgyzstan Askar Akayevich Akayev, shocked at the accident, expressed his condolences to the families of the Chinese victims through Ambassador Hong.

President Akayev also instructed concerned Kyrgyz government departments to get to the bottom of the case and punish the murderers according to the law.

Kyrgyz Prime Minister Nikolai Tanayev has signed an order to establish a special government committee, led by Deputy Prime Minister Kubanychbek Zhumaliyev, to take care of the investigation.

A team of Chinese police has been sent to Kyrgyzstan to assist local officers in investigating the murders, Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said Tuesday.

He added the precise identities of those killed are still being verified.

(Ema Ma)



Bomber Huang Minxiang in court

Photo by Niu Cheng

# Public Hearing Held on Campus Explosions

A public hearing on the explosions that rocked the campuses of Tsinghua University and Beijing University last month was held Tuesday at the Beijing No. 1 Intermediate People's Court.

Huang Minxiang, 26, was accused of causing the two explosions at two dining halls in the universities on February 25, which injured nine people and caused 220,000 yuan in damages.

According to prosecutors, Huang brought explosive powder to Beijing by train on February 21 and used it to fashion homemade bombs in his hotel room.

Huang fled after setting off the explosives, but was later caught by police. He confessed to the crime and apologized to those injured.

Huang will be sentenced at a later date.

(Xinhua)

## New Long Marchers (Continued from Page 1)

The pair somehow manage to strike a balance between continuing the march and enjoying the local scenery or learning about local life styles, but there are still some hardships that they did not really anticipate.

Illness has hit both of them on several occasions, with McEwen suffering from bronchitis for the past month.

And contrary to their expectation of being often deprived of human company, constant overfriendly welcomes have proven to be somewhat exhausting.

"At the end of 30 or 40 kilometers of walk, all you want to do is to lie down and have a rest, but it's really hard to get rid of them," says Jocelyn. McEwen adds, smiling, "To be honest, we'd prefer people to be unwelcoming."

However the occasional visits along the way by friends are always wel-



Andy McEwen (left) and Ed Jocelyn on the road to Zunyi

come, as are the sweets and western snacks the latest contingent from Beijing has brought down to Guiyang.

Dining out in Guiyang has also provided an opportunity for the two to relax. The visiting friends have been handed the heavy responsibility of ordering, while McEwen and Jocelyn sit back and wait for the dishes to arrive.

"It's an exhausting process to order a simple meal on the way, for we have to defeat the stereotype of foreigners," says McEwen.

Though Jocelyn jokes about how the past 2,675 kilometers they have walked "have destroyed the friendship," their relationship actually seems to be much stronger. When McEwen mentioned "feeling guilty" about his illness, Jocelyn countered that when he had been ill, McEwen had also looked out for him.

"It's an enormous project, I have never doubted it," says McEwen, "It's amazing that we've reached this stage already."

They say they will feel proud if they finally complete the march as planned this October, but expect that their lives will then quickly return to normal. Finding jobs will no doubt be high on the priority list, in order to start paying back the debts their New Long March has seen them accrue.



# TCL Seeks to Shake Free of Accounting Scandal

By Shan Jinliang

China's No.1 mobile phone manufacturer TCL Communications found itself the subject of media and public criticism this week, in the wake of the release of its 2000 financial report.

Following the media reports on the 2000 financial report last Saturday, TCL's stock price slumped, after a period of steady growth. Industry analysts say it is just one in a long list of financial-scandal tainted companies in the past few years, such as Yingguangxia and Lantian.

The report came out after TCL received a notice from the China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) Guangdong Regional Office on January 22, which illustrates the financial problems of the company. The notice signals four major problems have been found with the company, with the over-stating of profits

by 49.5 million yuan the most serious. The others were inaccurate accounting estimates, faulty interior monitoring of subordinate companies and under-trained accountants.

Responding to the media criticism and resulting drop in investor confidence, TCL issued an explanation. "There were some problems in our 2000 annual report," said Xiao Xiaoping, TCL board of directors secretary, "these were a financial problems caused by accountants unable to understand the policy."

He added that it was not accurate to say TCL Communications had faked performance results, since it was usual to adjust financial indexes in this way. Xiao said the company has penalized those who disobeyed the financial regulations, and legal action has been taken against one person.

However, analysts maintain it is an intentional move to cheat inves-

tors and the CSRC. Lian Mengke, a telecom analyst from Shanghai Hi-tone Securities told *Beijing Today* Wednesday that the company's 2000 annual report revealed only 26.3 million yuan profit, and if it did report more than 49.5 million profits, then it was actually losing 23.2 million yuan in 2000. "And more severely, the company would have received 'Special Treatment' since it did not make a profit in the previous year," said Lian.

Tuesday's *Beijing Youth Daily* commented that the company should not escape responsibility for such a severe problem, because the accountants, as professionals, and the registered accountants from accounting offices should have examined the 2000 report. Materials from the company show the accounting office for TCL Communications was the same office that was responsible for the ac-

counting of Yingguangxia, which was involved in a major financial scandal last year.

The 50 million yuan in question has not been found within the CSRC's scope of responsibility. Lian said the securities authority will not punish the company, and Xiao told *Beijing Today* they have not received any feedback from the authority.

Another media analyst, surnamed Ma, said TCL Communications has been a prestigious company in China in recent years, especially in 2002, and the scandal would have a big impact on its image, rather than its coming performance.

The local media even doubted the company's 2002 financial report though the company has dubbed it is an accurate report. Xiao admitted it is impossible to shrug off the incident, but he said media reports are to blame.

## Ministry Regulation Rules against CDMA-model PHS

By Tony Shaw

The two leading wireless operators, China Mobile and Unicom might feel a little less threatened this month, following the Ministry of Information Industry (MII) announcement that CDMA 450 model PHS networks, or "Big Smart," will be demolished within one month.

The CDMA 450 model PHS, unlike the PHS used by fixed line operators China Telecom and Netcom, uses technology almost the same as the current CDMA technology of China Unicom. Unable to move between cities, PHS has been defined as an extension of fixed line city calls, and with a permit from the MII, the number of PHS users had grown to over 13 million by the end of 2002 and is expected to reach 20 million this year.

It is believed a number of PHS users are former China Mobile and Unicom users. Now China Telecom and Netcom have been found to be surreptitiously setting up such the CDMA 450 model network in Shenzhen, Yunnan and Guizhou.

Jiang Hai, a telecom analyst from Minzu Securities told *Beijing Today* that with the CDMA 450 model PHS network, China Telecom and Netcom will become actual wireless telecom operators, granting them the same technology to develop the wireless business as China Mobile and Unicom.

"What's more, China Telecom and Netcom have more fruitful local resources to develop their wireless business," said Jiang, "and the fix line users will take less pains to upgrade the network." He suggested it would be easier for China Telecom and Netcom to develop wireless business than China Mobile and Unicom.

Now with almost the same functions as Unicom's CDMA but with lower prices, the number of CDMA 450 model PHS mobile phones has overtaken that of CDMA users in Shenzhen, a key region of wireless telecom market, and is causing concern for China Mobile and Unicom.

It is estimated the CDMA 450 model mobile phone users number around 200,000 in China, and the transferal to the CDMA 450 model PHS would not cost too much for the two. However, from this month, China Telecom and Netcom are strictly confined to city calls and the usual PHS business, meaning they threat they posed to the wireless business of China Mobile and Unicom has essentially disappeared.



Photo by Photocom



Chief share operator Ding Fugen (right) received a four-year prison sentence and a fine of 500,000 yuan.

Photo by Haishan

## Stock Manipulators Sentenced

By Shan Jinliang

The six defendants in the Zhongke Chuangye stock market scandal were sentenced Tuesday in Beijing No. 2 Intermediate Court.

The case, the biggest of its kind in China, involved 5.4 billion yuan in illegal capital with 100 companies and other organizations in over 20 provinces and municipalities. It is also the first stock share controlling case publicly prosecuted by the juridical department.

The six defendants received sentences of two years and two months to four years, and the accused organization Shanghai Huaya Industrial Development Corporation was fined 23 million yuan. Two others involved in the case, Lu Liang and Zhu Huanliang, fled the country before the trial.

Zhongke Chuangye was listed on the Shenzhen Stock Exchange in 1994, and with the operation of banker Zhu Huanliang, the share price jumped by 150 percent in less than five months in 1998. In December 1999, after a change of shareholders and business scope, it became a high-tech plus financial concept company named Zhongke Chuangye. In the following years banker Lu Xinjian (alias

Lu Liang) took steps to control most of the circular shares, and the share price rose to its highest point of 84 yuan on February 21, 2000, up from 14.57 yuan on October 27, 1998.

From December 25, the share price began to fall until it hit the bottom price of 11 yuan, setting a record fall in China's stock market and causing a market value loss of five billion yuan. The unusual stock movement attracted the attention of the securities authorities, and China Securities Regulatory Commission (CSRC) launched an investigation into the illegal stock share controls in January 2001, and the case was heard in Beijing No. 2 Intermediate Court in June 2002.

China Securities Haidian Nanlu branch general manager Liu Di said the sentence marked the end of the banker-controlling age for China's securities, and that the investors will be more mature as a result. But media analysts expressed their regrets about the ruling, saying a large number of small shareholders will find it hard to secure their interests. In terms of the civil payment, the case is far from over, according to a Wednesday report in *Jiefang Daily*.

## China Unicom to Woo High-End Consumers

By Shan Jinliang

China's second largest wireless operator, China Unicom launched a strategic grab for the high-end consumer market with its big brother, China Mobile, by opening the CDMA (Code Division Multiple Access) 1X network last Friday.

China Unicom finally reached its goal of developing seven million CDMA users last year, and from early this year it gave up the policy of expanding the market by offering low price services.

Insiders say one reason is strong competition from the booming PHS (Personal Handy-Access Service) mobile phones in smaller cities that offer lower call fees, and the other reason is that it found the strategy would cost too much and could not work in the long run.

CDMA 1X refers to the network based on the current CDMA network, and it has many similar functions to the GPRS network of China Mobile, such as Internet connectivity, and the ability to download software, music and photos. China Unicom marketing manager Li Weichong said the CDMA 1X technology will be more advanced than the second generation GPRS, as it is 2.5 generation, and will be more easily upgraded to the coming third generation mobile technology.

But the market response has been lukewarm for the two 2.5 generation network developers. China Mobile started to run the GRPS network from last May, but only 2.6 million users join the network, a small percentage compared with its overall number of 140 million users.

## Goldman Sachs President to Teach at Tsinghua

By Shan Jinliang

Tsinghua University confirmed to *Beijing Today* Monday that Goldman Sachs president and co-CEO John Thornton will take up his position as guest professor at the university from this July.

Thornton announced his resignation from the investment bank on March 23, effective July 1.

He Yihong, public relations officer at Tsinghua's Economics and Management School, said Thornton's teaching program, called Global Leadership, will mainly target EMBA (Executive Master of Business Administration), MBA and MPA (Master of Public Administration) students.

It is common practice for top business schools to hire renowned entrepreneurs, but the appointment is something of a landmark for Tsinghua. It is quite rare to see such a top manager like Mr. Thornton to organize and teach the program over such a long period of time, according to an official from Tsinghua.

Thornton has served as a member of the advisory committee of the school since 2000. "He has offered a number of constructive suggestions for the school," read a statement on the school's website.

Two criteria have to be met before a scholar or entrepreneur can be appointed guest professor at the school, where former premier Zhu Rongji taught for a number of years: having made notable achievements in the field he or she works in, and being capable of bringing a "shockwave" to the school. Usually a guest professor will serve a term of three years.



John Thornton  
Photo by Bqb

## Insurance Watchdog Sets Solvency Standard

By Tony Shaw

China's insurance watchdog, China Insurance Regulatory Commission (CIRC) announced its first regulation of 2003 last Thursday, which sets the solvency standard for all the insurance companies after a two-year trial period.

The regulation was implemented in response to a number of domestic insurance companies being found to have insufficient reserve capital to pay the insurance buyers, and it is also a move toward consistency with the newly amended Insurance Law.

"Though the CIRC did not tell how severe the solvency problems lie with the Chinese insurance companies," said Tuo Guozhun, an insurance professor from the Capital University of Economics and Business, "it is known among academics that the insurance companies' solvency is far from the required standard."

He said the regulation is also a step toward improving the competition ability of domestic companies to face a growing influx of foreign counterparts. AIA Shanghai branch has taken over 12 percent of the local market since it entered the market last year, he added.

CIRC Financial and Accounting Department director Ma Xueping said in the press release the regulation will secure the interests of the consumers. According to the regulation, the solvency abundance rate is calculated by dividing the actual and minimum solvencies.

If the rate is between 70 and 100 percent, the company will be ordered to undergo adjustment, when the rate is between 30 to 70 percent, the CIRC will ask the company to auction their assets, transfer some business and control the staff salary level, and if it is below 30 percent, the company will be unable to run.

Ma said other indexes, such as the insurance products, business scope and the branch range will also serve as requirements for the solvency, and he said the insurance industry administration is transferring its focus from registered capital, insurance rate and other regular business to stressing macro control of solvency.

The implementation of the regulation is seen as a positive move by the insurance companies, but Professor Tuo warned that now is not the proper time to make the focus transfer, because Chinese insurance consumers and companies are not mature enough to apply international standards, and ignoring micro control of single companies will not help them grow, while the consumers are still unable to choose the appropriate insurance products.

## Geely in Joint Venture with HK Company

By Shan Jinliang

China's only privately owned carmaker, Geely Group based in Zhejiang Province, took its next step toward establishing a joint venture with the Hong Kong listed Guorun Corporation Sunday.

Geely has become famous in China for its low priced cars and its owner, Li Shufu, who is listed as one of the 100 richest Chinese by US magazine *Forbes*. With the decrease of its low-cost advantage, the company is seeking cooperation with foreign auto giants for technology and capital.

Last year a number of domestic state-owned carmakers signed deals with overseas car giants, which squeezed Geely's space in the Chinese market.

The joint venture, named Zhejiang Geely Guorun Auto Company was just an implementation of the contract the two sides signed in February. According to the contract, Geely will hold over 50 percent of the stock in terms of assets and Guorun the rest in terms of cash.

Regarding the controlling stake by Geely, an industry expert who requested anonymity told *International Financial News* Monday Geely hopes not to do harm to its own car brands and to keep the intellectual property rights of the new cars. Currently, Geely is in the midst of a trademark dispute with Japanese carmaker Toyota.

## Europeans Exploring Digital Olympics Market

By Zhao Hongyi

Christine Reuter is a marketing staff of the Berlin-based "A Med-World AG", a medical equipment and technology designer and producer. She was searching for a potential partner for her company's mobile diagnostic handset at the "Euro-China Workshop on Digital Olympics," a seminar organized by the European Union (EU) and China's Ministry of Science and Technology.

More than 250 delegates from thirty companies, academic and research institutions, and government agencies from EU attended the one day seminar, aiming at selling their products, technologies or joining Chinese partners to develop new products for the 2008 Digital Olympics.

China has promised a High-tech, Green and People's Olympics in 2008. Shen Maoxiang, general director of the Digital Olympics Initiative under the ministry, says since the facilities construction for the 2008 Olympic Games has started this year, annual purchase for digital equipments and products amounts to 100 million yuan, at least.

Pedro de Sampaio Nunes, director for Information Society Strategy and eEurope from the EU, also promised to support the research and production projects within the organizations' sixth framework program, a five-year assistance program to China that spent 30 million euros on IT and digital technologies and products research and production in its fifth program.

A permanent "EU-China Working Group on the Digital Olympics" will also be established today in Beijing. The group will mainly provide recommendations on practical projects applying for the EU's assistance.

"We are more eager to find potential purchasers and partners," said Reuter, "I have only one week in China. And it seems I have to come here more frequently hereinafter."



# France Looks to EU, UN to Protect Interests in Post-War Iraq

Paris, March 30 (AFP) - French political and business leaders are pinning their hopes on a leading role for the United Nations and European Union in post-war Iraq, after the first reconstruction contracts were awarded to US firms.

"The UN must steer the process," said Dominique de Villepin, France's foreign minister, in a speech to the London-based International Institute of Strategic Studies on Thursday.

De Villepin was speaking days after Stevedoring Services of America scooped the first contract under the US Agency for International Development's 900-million-dollar (842-million-euro) budget for an opening round of Iraq reconstruction projects.

Announcing the 4.8-million-dollar deal, USAID said the Seattle-based company would provide "assessment and management" services at Umm Qasr, the deep-water port facility seized by coalition forces in the early stages of the ground conflict.

Under a separate deal, Kellogg Brown and Root, a subsidiary of oil services giant Halliburton -- chaired by US Vice President Dick Cheney until 2000 -- won a Pentagon contract to extinguish oilfield fires.

The French company with most to lose from the US-led war - and France's refusal to support it morally or militarily - is surely TotalFinaElf, the oil major controlled by the French state until its 1994 privatization, during its former incarnation as Elf Aquitaine.



AFP Photo

TotalFinaElf's long history in Iraq goes back to the company's first significant oil find at the northern Kirkuk oilfield in 1927.

More recently it is reported to have agreed deals with the Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's regime, granting it rights to develop the country's Majnoon and Nahr Umar fields.

Mujnoon, some 30 miles north of Basra, is the largest Iraqi oilfield earmarked for development, with crude reserves estimated at between 12 billion and 20 billion barrels and a potential daily production capacity of up to 600,000 barrels.

Now, TotalFinaElf's prospects in Iraq

look truly grim, oil experts say, at a time when even British companies fear being left out of Washington's plans.

## Russia To Lose Out on Postwar Iraqi Oil Reserves

Moscow, March 28 (AFP) - Russia can forget about its oil interests in Iraq, as Washington and London will cut Moscow out of any postwar carve-up of the world's second largest crude reserves, a Russian oil chief said.

"We're clearly going to have to cut our losses on anything we have there and anything we could have had," the head of Russian state-run oil firm Zarubezhneft, Nikolai Tokarev, told the daily Vremya Novostei.

"The Americans haven't gone into this war intending to share with anyone. It's a war trophy," he said.

Tokarev estimated his own firm's "concrete losses" in Iraq at 150-180 million dollars, not counting lost revenue from subsequent projects.

"We were on to some huge deposits, irrigation projects, a whole lot of things apart from the oil sector," he said.

Analyst Sergei Rogov of the USA-Canada Institute agreed that there was "no point in rushing to try and get a share of post-war Iraq's oil wealth: we won't get even a breadcrumb."

Moreover, "as far as oil contracts as concerned, Russian firms don't have the capital or technology needed to develop Iraqi oilfields, they would have needed Western firms in any case," he told reporters.

As for Iraq's eight-billion-dollar debt to Russia, "neither Saddam nor the regime that replaces him will pay our debts back. The economic reconstruction of the country will absorb all resources," Rogov predicted.

Moscow has maintained important trade ties with Baghdad since Soviet times, and Russian oil companies have invested more than one billion dollars in the Iraqi oil industry since 1996, although they have been mostly unable to develop fields because of UN sanctions.

## Analysts' Take:

**Fan Gang, director, National Economic Research Institute, Chinese Academy of Social Science**

*Aside from the oil exploration rights, which clearly will be handled by the US and UK, we can obtain contracts from Iraq's reconstruction, based on the high quality and low price advantages of our products and services.*

*We can provide not only finished daily use products, medical products and emergency goods, but infrastructure like houses, roads, bridges, airports and power stations.*

*What we have to be aware of is that international relations, both bilateral and multilateral, are of importance here. But we can at least make our efforts through multilateral channels like the public bids set up by the UN and the market-oriented practices of big contractors in Iraq.*



Qantas Airways chief executive Geoff Dixon  
Reuters Photo

## Qantas: Iraq War Will Cut Earnings

Canberra, Australia, March 27 (AP) - Qantas Airways has cut its profit forecasts and reduced planned international services over the next several months because of the Iraq war, terrorism and a mystery respiratory illness in Asia, the airline's chief executive, Geoff Dixon said.

Dixon said the three factors had led the Australian flag carrier to cut the number of planned international flights by up to 20 percent between April and July.

That meant Qantas would be "unable to meet market expectations" for profits for the fiscal year ending June 30, Dixon said in a statement.

(Peter O'Connor)



AFP Photo

## American Airlines Pilots Offer Concessions

New York, March 30 (Reuters) - The pilots' union at American Airlines said it presented the cash-starved carrier with a concession deal worth \$660 million a year, which will achieve the cost-savings management required.

American, the world's largest carrier, was already struggling prior to the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States. A difficult situation turned into a financial crisis after the attacks, due to the sharp drop in air travel.

Sources say American Airlines is filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection, making it the largest carrier ever to seek such protection and the first major US corporate casualty of the war in Iraq.

(Jon Herskovitz)



An Air Canada employee directs a passenger at Montreal's Dorval Airport, April 1, 2003.

Reuters Photo

## Air Canada Plans Restructuring

Montreal, April 2 (Reuters) - Shares of Air Canada plunged on Wednesday as the country's biggest airline prepared for restructuring.

Air Canada - the world's No. 11 carrier - said mounting losses from a deep slump in air travel, high costs and fare wars had forced it to seek court protection.

Air Canada has obtained C\$1.03 billion (\$700 million) of debtor-in-possession financing from GE Capital Canada that, along with its own cash reserves, should allow it to keep flying through the restructuring process, the airline said.

(Robert Melnbardis)

## BT Launches Price War



AFP Photo

up to 20 times cheaper than its main rivals, BT claimed in a statement.

The new tariffs sees six pence (around 9 cents or euros) for up to an hour on all evening and weekend calls made to anywhere in the UK.



Retail sales and consumer confidence in Britain have fallen to the lowest level in ten years, according to the Confederation of British Industry. Retailing has been the main motor of UK economic growth since the recession ten years ago.

Xinhua Photo

# Chinese Airlines Cancel Flights to Middle East

## War Impact on Domestic Economy is Emerging

Beijing, March 31 (AP) - China Southern Airlines, the country's largest carrier, said Monday it was canceling China's last direct regular flights to the Middle East because of the war in Iraq.

The flights, which link Beijing with Sharjah in the United Arab Emirates, would be canceled from Saturday, said an airline spokeswoman who also said no date had been set for resuming the flights.

China's flag carrier, Air China, canceled its only Middle East flights - between Beijing and Kuwait City - in February.

## Analysts' Take:

**Long Yongtu, secretary general of China Boao Forum, former vice minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Cooperation**

*The Iraq war won't have too much of an impact on China's economy, because China has been successfully shifting its economic growth from export-oriented*

*to domestic demand-oriented.*

*China has also diversified its oil supply sources. Of the 70 million tons imported last year, 50 percent came from the Middle East, and only 1 percent came from Iraq.*

*China's exports in the first three months are expected to grow by 50 percent from the same period of last year. Due to the expectation of war, overseas customers increased their orders by large margins before the war started.*

**Hu Angang, director, Center for China Studies, Chinese Academy of Sciences**

*Compared to the oil prices, a slowing down of demand from the US market has a larger impact on China's economy, because China has a higher dependence on the US market.*

**Wei Xiaolan, director for business development, China National Tourism Administration**

*China can emerge as a safe destination for travel and tourism in the long term, as long as we can handle*

*the crisis. In fact, after the September 11 attacks in 2001, China has seen an increasing number of tourists arriving from abroad.*

## Chinese Media Reports:

*Though analysts predict the ongoing Iraq war will have a limited impact on China's economy, local companies are starting to claim their business is suffering, and they are expecting a deteriorating global market environment afterwards.*

*In the tourism industry, domestic travel agencies have seen dramatic decreases in the number of tourists arriving, from the US and Middle East in particular. Chinese tourists have also cancelled most of their trips to the US and Middle East.*

*The World Travel and Tourism Council says that a long lasting Iraq war could cost more than 493,000 jobs in China's tourism industry, and a decrease of 8.4 percent of the total*

*number of tourists to the country.*

*Entering April, more reports are coming out concerning the war's impact on China's exports.*

*China News Agency reports that Sichuan Ziyang Diesel Engine Plant is afraid its locomotive and cabin supply contract worth \$74 million would stall. The contract is a supply project for the 800 kilometers long newly constructed railway in Iraq, which is part of the UN's suspended "oil for food" program.*

*A lot of the export-oriented companies in Guangdong and Fujian provinces are also seeing diminishing orders from the US and Middle East, which used to be their top customers.*

*What's more, the rising prices of the marine lines to the Persian Gulf, crude oil, and chemical derivatives from oil have put the traditional manufacturing sectors like toys, shoes, fabrics, garments and plastic products under heavy pressure due to rising costs.*

**- China News Service, April 1**



# Sick Surgeon's Hands Still Busy

By Chen Ying

Through the wracking pain of terminal stomach cancer Wei Jianing, an outstanding local hand surgeon, has not stopped drawing illustrations about hand surgery from his bed in Beijing Ji-shuitan Hospital.

Wei, 65, the former director of the hand surgery department, has completed more than 50,000 operations in the past 42 years.

"He conducted several operations every day and never took time off when he was on duty in the outpatient department. He once stood at the operating table for over 20 hours," said Xu Yandi, secretary of the Communist Party branch at Ji-shuitan Hospital.

Alfred B. Swanson, former pres-



Wu Yi, vice-premier of China, meets Wei Jianing at the Great Hall of People  
Photo by Hu Haixin

ident of the International Federation of Societies for Surgery of the Hand, once said Wei had the best hands in China.

However, he is as well known in the medical field for his illustrations of hand surgery procedures as his actual operations. "There are doctors who do surgery as well, and others that can do equally excellent illustrations. But he is the only one I know that can do both with such skill," said Swanson.

With the illustrations, Wei intends to make hand surgery possible for more people. "Most patients I have done surgery on are poor and had to borrow money to come to Beijing. Many others can't get surgery because they can't afford it. My book of hand surgery illustrations could enable local doctors to do these surgeries," he said.

Though he began feeling uncomfortable at the beginning of last

year, Wei held off from receiving medical checks until last May.

By the time he was diagnosed with stomach cancer, the disease was far along and his condition quickly deteriorated. Wei is now confined to his bed and gets all sustenance from the intravenous transfusions he receives for more than 12 hours every day.

Yet he has refused to give up his work. Wei said, "It has long been my dream to finish a book of hand surgery illustrations. I'm not finished, so I'll keep going as long as I can sit up and my hands are steady."

To honor his heroic spirit, last week the Ministry of Health awarded him the Norman Bethune Medal, this country's highest medical honor.



Photo by Cheng Tieliang

## Anti-War March Staged in Beijing

By Ivy Zhang

A group of 150 expatriates marched from the west gate of Ritan Park to the Cultural Division of the US embassy last Sunday morning in protest of the war in Iraq.

The march started at 9 am and lasted about 40 minutes. The route was cleared by a strong police presence. The marchers started out quietly, but broke into loud shouts of "Stop the War!" and "No War!" as they approached the embassy.

When they reached the embassy, the protesters made a u-turn and took position outside the gate for the rest of the demonstration.

Among the marchers was Australian Yvone Gluyas, a member of Beijing Peace Action, "a virtual organization" that organized this event.

She held a sign that read "War is not Healthy for Children and Other Living Things". Between the words were two photos of her nine-year-old son and 16-year-old daughter.

"I think our words were spoken," Gluyas said. She recalled taking part in demonstrations in the 1970s against the Vietnam War, in which her father died.

"I believe my voice was among the thousands that stopped the Vietnam War. I want my voice to be among the thousands of people around the world calling to stop this war," she added. "I demonstrated because I believe it is illegal to interfere in the internal affairs of another country."

It was the second demonstration organized by Beijing Peace Action in March. On March 21, a group of around 70 people assembled at the park, but they were informed by police that they had to apply for formal permission to demonstrate on the street. They did so the following Monday.

"We were given permission within 48 hours. The Chinese government respects our right to express our opinions," said Nick Young, leader of Beijing Peace Action.



Ashwini, an Indian student, has a meeting of the minds with Meng Yan, a four-year-old orphan from Jiangxi Province

Photo by Li Jinglu

## Young Foreign Students Lend Hand to Orphans

By Lily Li

The Tongzhou Care Center, a local orphanage, received special guests last Wednesday, when four 16-year-old foreign girls volunteered to spend five days at the facility to lend a helping hand.

The girls, from different countries but all students at the Singa-

pore International Middle School, originally planned to go to Vietnam for internships required for graduation. However, after seeing a three-minute-long spot about the center on a CCTV-4 program, they changed their minds and headed for Beijing.

The volunteers brought gifts including stationary and toys to the

kids and forged deep friendships with them.

When the children said goodbye to the girls on Monday, everyone was in tears. The girls promised to return and to send more of their classmates to work at the center.

According to Chang Meng, the director of the center, right now only

four families regularly volunteer at the center and she welcomed more Chinese young people to come and interact with the children.

"These foreign kids showed a spirit of unselfishness and love for others that I think Chinese children should learn something from," Chang said.

## Girl Donates Marrow to Save Father

By Lily Li

Zhang Wanqing got a hero's welcome when she returned to Yuhong Middle School on Tuesday last week.

The 12-year-old first-grade junior student rejoined her classmates after recovering from giving two bone marrow donations to her ailing father within a one-month period.

She is the youngest person ever to donate bone marrow in this city.

On April 17 last year, the General Hospital of the Air Force of the People's Liberation Army diagnosed Zhang's father, an air force captain, with acute leukemia.

Zhang's mother checked with relatives and all bone marrow banks in Beijing, Shanghai and Taiwan for a match for her husband, but the search was unsuccessful.

Just when the cause seemed hopeless, doctors advised Zhang Wanqing be tested. Yet her father insisted it was a bad idea and



Zhang Wanqing

Photo by Guo Feng

would not allow the tests to be conducted. Six months later, his life was in great danger, and doctors told him he had to receive a bone marrow transplant or he would die.

Finally, he agreed to the testing of his daughter. The brave girl never hesitated.

"My father is everything to me, so I'd give him whatever he wants," she told a reporter from *Beijing Youth Daily* as published last Sunday.

The tests showed she was a positive match, but making her a ready donor was not so simple. The requirements for a transplant stipulate that the donor should weight nearly the same as the recipient. Since her father weighed 50 kilograms more than her, Zhang Wanqing had to put on the pounds quickly. She gained five kilograms in a week, but because of the remaining difference, two operations had to be conducted instead of the usual one.

The girl never cried during the first three-hour procedure done in late February nor the second done on March 5.

After resting in the hospital for nearly one month, Zhang was ready to go back school. "I'm fine, I feel quite healthy," she said.

## Stones Cancel China Concerts

By Lily Li

The Rolling Stones, currently on the Asian leg of their "Licks" world tour, have cancelled plans to play two concerts in Shanghai on April 1 and in Beijing on April 4. The shows would have been the band's first performances in the country.

"We are very sad and disappointed not to be able to do these concerts," lead singer Mick Jagger said in a statement on behalf of the band on their website [www.rollingstones.com](http://www.rollingstones.com). "We have been looking forward to the shows in China for so long and will reschedule them as soon as possible."

The veteran rockers previously called off two shows scheduled for last Friday and Saturday in Hong Kong, after performing in Singapore earlier in the week.

According to the web posting, "The number of cases of SARS in Hong Kong and Southern China and continued concern over large gatherings have created apprehension among fans and concern for their safety."

Chen Jixin, vice president of New Era Culture and Communication Development, one of the

promoters for the Stones' Beijing performance, confirmed the news and said the company stopped selling tickets as soon as they received notice of the cancellation on Friday evening.

"Only 20 percent of the tickets were left open when the band made the announcement," said Chen. According to her, prices for tickets to the show ranged from



A poster for the planned Stones performances in Beijing

200 yuan to 3,000 yuan a piece, falling at the very high end for concerts in China.

The company released a formal notice the next day informing ticket holders they can receive full refunds at place of purchase or at the intended venue, the Workers' Indoor Stadium.

To date, there have been no announcements of plans to reschedule the China shows.

## Investigation Sparks Closing of Illegal Taxi Repair Shop

By Lily Li

Acting on tips from readers, reporters from *Beijing Youth Daily* and the CCTV-2 program "Life" conducted a thorough investigation of an illegal taxi repair shop last week.

Their report was published in the newspaper last Saturday, and the next day the shop was closed down by the local Department of Industry and Commerce.

One of the readers that spurred the investigation, a Ms. Guo, called *Beijing Youth Daily's* hotline to report an incident in which she was charged 26 yuan more than normal for taking a taxi from her home to the airport. She added that the receipt she was given by the driver did not bear the taxation number, company telephone number or taxi registration number.

Another reader, Mr. Wang, recounted problems with a taxi fare, and even offered the name of an illegal shop he knew of in Liuliqiao that he said may have been adjusting taxi meters.

At 10:40 pm last Friday, the reporters found the shop, located in a hutong near Dianli General Hospital. The store's windows were covered in characters reading "meter" and "repair". Several taxis were parked outside.

When the reporters showed interest in the meters lying on a table inside, a young man told them, "for 350 yuan, you can get a meter that can be

hidden so passengers don't see it." He admitted such machines do not print receipts, but explained that was not necessarily a problem, since people from other provinces are used to getting hand-written taxi receipts.

The store charged 1,000 yuan for meters capable of printing receipts. The young man said the store could tweak standard meters to run faster, meaning they could "count one kilometer when the taxi had only gone 60 meters."

According to the man, the shop had been operating for one year and had adjusted many meters.

All shops that repair meters must receive approval from the local Bureau of Quality and Technical Supervision, to which repaired machines must be sent for strict examination. According to the Fengtai District Bureau, this shop was unregistered and unapproved.

Immediately after the report appeared in *Beijing Youth Daily*, staff from the Fengtai Department of Industry and Commerce launched a sudden examination of the store. The shop's boss, identified by his driver's license as Liu Hongcai, 25, from Shandong Province, was arrested.

Department director Li Jianzhong and his colleague shut the shop and confiscated all materials and equipment inside. He said the department would conduct further investigations into the case.



# Should Students Get Off Lighter?

By Su Wei

The prosecution of a junior student, surnamed Wang, from a university in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province was deferred by Pukou Procuratorate in January this year for a period of five months. The reason, according to the procuratorate, is that “he did not intend to commit a crime and his performance at university was good.” The student was found stealing a mobile phone from one of his classmates.

During the prosecution deferral, Wang continued his studies without being expelled by the university. He was requested to think about his performance and report to the procuratorate regularly. The procuratorate will decide whether to prosecute him or not based on his performance during the five months.

According to the procuratorate, this form of prosecution deferral for students began three years ago. Several university students who committed less severe crimes such as theft and causing a public disturbance have been given prosecution deferrals without being fined or sentenced — punishments ordinarily required for such crimes by China’s Criminal Law.

‘The prosecution deferral does not mean that we never prosecute the suspect. If the suspect fails to realize the harm they have caused, we can still prosecute them after the period.’

— Huang Xingwu

‘It sends a very bad message to society if students are treated differently from other categories of people.’

— Joe Simone

Jiangnan Times, a newspaper in Nanjing first reported the prosecution deferral this Monday. Several Beijing newspapers reprinted the story on the following day.

Last week, Liu Haiyang, a senior student from Tsinghua University, was prosecuted by Xicheng Procuratorate, Beijing due to his “intention to damage public property.” He poured a bottle of soft drink mixed with caustic soda onto a Sun Bear on January 29 last year and sulfuric acid into the mouth of an Asiatic Black Bear at Beijing Zoo on February 23 last year. A total of five bears — three Asiatic Black Bears, one Brown Bear and one Sun Bear — were injured in Liu’s two attacks.

A member of a Beijing procuratorate, requesting to be unnamed

It is wrong to have such prosecution deferral and give it to people according to their identity. University students should not be given such special treatment. The procuratorate in Nanjing is treating university students as a separate and special group resulting in people in society being divided into different ranks.

In this case, how is society in today’s China different from that of feudal times?

Everyone is born equal, and this cannot be changed by their identity or social status. Everyone should be equal in front of the law. No single person or group of people should be above the law. Otherwise law loses its fairness.

Huang Xingwu, chief deputy procurator of Pukou Procuratorate, Nanjing, Jiangsu Province

Procuratorates have the right to prosecute or not according to the suspect’s age, crime, and the severity of crime committed. The prosecution deferral does not mean that we never prosecute the suspect. If the suspect fails to realize the harm they have caused, we can still prosecute them after the period.

In fact, we are cautious in selecting suspects — at the moment I mean university students — to give such deferrals. Usually they haven’t committed any severe crimes such as murder, rape or robbery.

Some people say we are “educating top criminals.” How can they say this? I totally disagree

with them. University students are not evil by nature. Once they commit a crime, does that mean they become criminals for ever?

The deferral is the embodiment of the Chinese government’s policy on people committing crimes — to help them through persuasion and to save them through education. We have the police for criminals to be reformed through labor. The only difference between prosecution deferrals and reforming through labor is in the method of saving criminals.

A foreign journalist with a background in Chinese history

If you commit a crime, you must pay your debt to society.

For law to work, justice must be meted out to all members of society equally, whatever their race, creed, social or financial position.

Otherwise, you have one type of justice applied to the powerful and another set of rules punishing those who aren’t. It is a recipe for revolution.

The Qing Dynasty had laws lessening the punishment for successful graduates of the examination system. A Junshi degree holder could not be publicly beaten if he broke minor laws.

A person is considered an adult after the age of 18 in my country. You are supposed to be a big boy or girl at that stage, able to take responsibility for your actions.

Back in my college days, several friends and I got busted for having open containers of beer in a car which we had bought and started drinking on our way back to the dormitory after a rock concert. Thank God we weren’t drunk and therefore a danger on the road; we would have gone to jail for that.

We couldn’t talk the police out of giving us a ticket. The violation required us to go to court, where we were found guilty. All three of us ended up with the choice of paying a big fine, or doing community service.

The difference between my country and China is the role of the individual. The police did not notify my university of my actions; what I did was none of their business. My crime did not involve the school nor was it one that interfered with my class work.

If it had involved a crime serious enough for jail, I would have been expelled and it could have ruined my life, but that is what happens when you don’t obey the law.

Now that I am older, I look back on what happened as an invaluable learning experience for me as a person, as a member of society. The punishment was fair, and stands as an example of how the system of one law for everyone actually can work.

Joe Simone, a partner with the Hong Kong office of international law firm Baker & McKenzie

I’m not aware of any Chinese law which suggests that university students can enjoy special treatment of the kind you mention. If

there is such treatment, it is probably contained in a local regulation or policy document. It is an interesting experiment, since people make mistakes when they are young, and “everybody deserves a second chance” (as they say).

In other countries, the law normally does not give special treatment to people over 18 years of age. However, judges and prosecutors are generally free to consider the specific circumstances of a case, and in some places the prosecutors have the discretion to delay prosecution of minor violations, and then drop the matter if no further crimes are committed within a certain period (six months, one year, five years - depends on the crime and the general circumstances). Judges are allowed the discretion for minor crimes to impose a suspended sentence, i.e. to impose a jail term but not send the person to jail as long as they do not commit a crime during a given period (often five years). The same concept applies in China.

It sends a very bad message to society if students are treated differently from other categories of people. But the police, prosecutors and courts should use their discretion to educate and deal with violators in the way they think is most appropriate, given the circumstances.

Song Lele, a sophomore of Jishou University of Hunan

The only word that I want to say is “No” — university students should not be treated differently.

University students are adults and should be responsible for themselves. I am worried that some university students may have the opinion that small crimes mean nothing to them if they can be given a prosecution deferral. This could lead to more crimes.

Gu, a staff member of the Party Office of Tsinghua University

In my opinion, the deferred prosecution is not only good for the university students who did something wrong or committed crimes but also good for society’s stability. What if the university students are imprisoned with some evil criminals and become influenced by them during their imprisonment?

Li Jinqing, released from Beijing Prison last year

When I was in prison I met some newcomers transferred from Beijing Juvenile Delinquents Prison. When I talked to them I had the feeling they thought that as juvenile delinquents they would have been more likely to get lenient sentences. I think many students are unable to understand and appreciate the kindness of the procurators in deferring their prosecution and cherish the opportunity to correct themselves.

To me, the procuratorate treating university students differently is just an exhibition to society and a way of showing that they protect intellectuals.

Law is law. No one can or should avoid its punishment.

# Call Me Comrade

‘I don’t think “Comrade” should also be used in administration departments, where efficiency and authority are needed most.’

— Jing Yang

‘When I first started working at a Beijing joint venture in 1995, I called a co-worker “comrade” only to be told the word had taken on a homosexual connotation.’

— Ed Lanfranco

‘It’s not a small thing to promote the use of “Comrade”. But the Chinese Communist Party needs more improvement, not just in the form of address.’

— Zhuang Hu

By Sun Ming

Shanghai Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China has issued a notice urging all communists in Shanghai to revert to addressing each other by the title of “comrade”.

The notice advised communists to stop referring to each other by titles that designate their position, such as “party secretary” or “minister”, saying that addressing high-ranking party members by their formal titles promotes arrogance.

Jie Fang Daily, a newspaper in Shanghai, said in an editorial on Sunday last week that the return of “Comrade” would improve the democratization of the Communist Party.

“Communists, whether high-ranking party members or common members, are all servants of the people,” said the newspaper.

Southern Daily, a newspaper in Guangzhou, published an editorial on Monday calling for the return of “Comrade” in Guangdong Province. “Comrade” sounds amiable, which can reflect the equality among Communist Party members. Chinese haven’t heard this form of address for a long time,” said the newspaper.

“Comrade” became a form of address in China in the 1920’s, adopted from the Russian Communist Party. All Communist Party members in China called each other comrade, such as “Comrade Mao Zedong” and “Comrade Zhou Enlai”.

After liberation, “Comrade” became the most common form of address among ordinary people in the country. But in the Communist Party, members called their superiors “Secretary” or “Minister” instead of “Comrade”. Chairman Mao Zedong urged a return to the use of “Comrade” in 1956, and in 1979, Deng Xiaoping stressed this form of address again.

But it seems people have come to prefer calling each other “Miss”, “Mr” or “Mrs”.

“Comrade” nearly disappeared from society,” said a Beijinger who refused to publish his name. “If someone

called me ‘Comrade’ on the street, I would be surprised.”

The notice advising the use of “Comrade” in Shanghai aroused different opinions:

Liu Lisha, a staff member from the Organization Department of Shanghai Municipal Committee

My colleagues and I all support the notice. “Comrade” is rarely heard in our work unit. Sometimes we call our superior “Minister Li”, sometimes ‘Boss Li’.

It’s unnecessary to insist on the use of “Comrade” in society, but we should insist within the Communist Party.

Jing Yang, researcher with the Academy of Social Sciences

The Communist Party needs a democratic and equal atmosphere. Calling each other “Comrade” is an advantage for this. But I don’t think “Comrade” should also be used in administration departments, where efficiency and authority are needed most.

Zhang Xiong, chief editor of Capital Airport News

I don’t think it’s necessary to issue such a notice. It’s just a form of address. My view is “let it be”. We should reduce formalism.

Many shopping centers or stores in Beijing require all salespersons to speak “Welcome to our store” each time they meet a new customer. Is it necessary? I don’t think so. The salespersons get tired very soon if they repeat the same sentence thousands of times a day. How can they provide considerate and warm service then? What customers need most is good service, not just a greeting. They can also say hello to customers with a smile, a nod or something else. So it’s stupid to make such a regulation.

The requirement of everybody to say “Comrade” is the same thing. The most important thing is to raise the efficiency of the Communist Party.

By the way, my co-workers, even the new staff members, usually call me “Brother Xiong”. They view me as

a brother. If they call me “Comrade Zhang” someday, I will feel uncomfortable.

Ed Lanfranco, UPI Bureau Chief, Beijing

The idea of Communist Party members in Shanghai calling each other comrade is fine if it helps build egalitarian camaraderie. Genuine acceptance of the term harkens back to the early traditions and aspirations of the Party. Perhaps it will remind officials they are servants of the people and that no individual is greater or lesser than any other. That’s the theory, at least.

My concern is what should non-party members, the majority of China’s citizenry, call members of the Party? Comrade seems inappropriate because the individual is formally interacting with a person belonging to an organization he or she is not a member of.

Moreover, the term has taken on new connotations in contemporary Chinese society. When I first started working at a Beijing joint venture in 1995, I called a co-worker “comrade” only to be told the word had taken on a homosexual connotation. Over time however, my colleagues and I occasionally used the term, especially when one person needed another person’s help and cooperation on a project nearing a deadline.

Zhuang Hu, a communist in Beijing

A form of address can convey people’s values and exert a subtle influence on people’s thoughts. It’s not a small thing to promote the use of “Comrade”. But the Chinese Communist Party needs more improvement, not just in the form of address.

Atze Schmidt, journalist in German Department, Foreign Language Press

There was a time when people in Germany addressed their superiors with their titles and/or their positions e.g. Mr. Director or Mr. Senior Engineer. This, however, is an obsolete custom and no one is sorry that it has gone.

## Voices on the Internet

Xiao Guang

In my view, the notice should be issued throughout the country.

Ji Kede

Shanghai is the most modern city in China. So it’s really a surprise for us that the city issued such a notice.

Chetianlu

I’m a chairman of the Student Union of our university. My schoolmates always call me “chairman”.

## SOUND BITES

“Leslie used to jokingly call himself a legend. We, too, called him by this name. But no one had ever imagined a legend would end this way.”

— Wong Kar-wai, a Hong Kong film director, regarding actor and pop star Leslie Cheung Kwok-wing who died after leaping from a hotel on April 1.

“Clearly, the American war plans misjudged the determination of the Iraqi forces. Our reports about civilian casualties here, about the resistance of the Iraqi forces, are going back to the United States. It helps those who oppose the war.”

— Journalist Peter Arnett, covering the war from Baghdad, told state-run Iraqi TV in an interview aired Sunday that the American-led coalition’s first war plan had failed because of Iraq’s resistance. NBC fired him on Monday.

“People are probably going to want to laugh more this year than ever before.”

— Dan Neal, assistant features editor from Florida’s Palm Beach Post, which continues its tradition of running a joke feature inside the paper for the fool’s day on April 1.

By Chen Ying





By Su Wei

She Hua, an accountant in a joint venture in Beijing, is worried about her move to Shanghai this Friday. Her husband has got a new job there but she's not expecting a pleasant welcome. "We are typical Beijingers. I have heard that Shanghai people treat other people as peasants," she said. "I don't think we're going to be able to get on with them."

By way of evidence, Li Ye mentions that her neighbors — a newly married Shanghai couple — appear over-concerned about the formalities of social relationships. "I heard that they liked dumplings but not the frozen ones sold in stores. So I give them a bowl of dumplings whenever I make them for my family. But they always give me some typical Shanghai products in return. I am just being nice to them but it seems they are calculating how much they should pay me back. Do they have a problem with feeling indebted to me?"

**"Don't city dwellers generally look down on rural people? Don't the rich look down on the poor? People who accuse Shanghai people of looking down on other people have an inferiority complex and are unwilling or afraid to accept the truth."**

— Qian Xueming, a sales representative in a furniture manufacturing factory.

**"Shanghai men have more style. For instance, if you see a man from Guangzhou wearing a suit, the sense you get is just that he has a lot of money."**

— Qiu Ying, a staff member of a foreign company, who married a man from Shanghai two months ago.

# Shanghai Snobs?

But other Beijingers interviewed by *Beijing Today* are more enthusiastic about Shanghai people.

Wen Hua, a Beijinger who started her business eight years ago in Shanghai after graduating from Shanghai Fudan University, says she used to feel looked down upon in Shanghai. But the more contact she has with Shanghai people, the more she respects them.

If choosing a business partner between Shanghai people or Beijingers, she says she would go for the former. "My heart is at rest when I do business with Shanghai people. They are very pragmatic," she says. "It is more difficult to bargain with Shanghai people compared with Beijingers, as they weigh every contract item. Beijingers never seem to care about the details and contracts are signed very quickly. But the contracts signed with Beijingers can seldom be carried out smoothly."

So what do Shanghai people think of themselves? *Beijing Youth Daily* and Data Sea

Market Research released a survey last week conducted among over 200 Shanghai people, half women, half men.

## Merits vs. shortcomings

Du Min, a vice general manager of a Shanghai stock exchange company, goes to the library twice a week with his seven-year-old son and to the cinema once a month with his wife. "There should be more to life than work. I want to take every opportunity to enjoy it," he says.

In the survey, "paying attention to quality of life" ranks highest in the list of merits Shanghai people attribute to themselves with nearly 90% of people mentioning it, followed by "trying to give people a good impression" at 85% and "punctuality" at 82%. The survey found that Shanghai people also consider themselves to be law abiding, ambitious, hard working, trustworthy, thrifty and practical.

Qian Xueming, a sales representative in a furniture manufacturing factory recalls

that when he first came to Beijing he felt uneasy about being so comparatively unused to spending money on dinners and entertainment for his colleagues and business partners. He believes that "friendship can never be obtained through eating and drinking. A friend in need is a friend indeed. I see no need for such entertainment expenses."

He says he used to have no friends in Beijing because all his colleagues thought he was over-thrifty. "But now I have a lot of Beijingers as friends. They tell me they feel safe and relaxed with me."

The survey found that "haggling over every ounce" is regarded as the biggest shortcoming among Shanghai people at 74%, followed by "looking down on other people" (67%), "being less generous towards strangers" (54%) and "narrow minded" (50%).

Du Min feels there isn't necessarily anything wrong with haggling over every ounce. He says in his company, it is the Shanghai people that ask the most questions about salaries and welfare upon being recruited, "but they also work much more steadily once they are satisfied and are less likely to skip jobs continually."

Du Min does point out that the business competition in Shanghai is like a battle and being both cautious and clever is necessary just to survive, let alone become successful.

He missed an opportunity to be listed in the Hong Kong stock market last year. "One of my friends who was involved with the stock market tried to persuade me to take the opportunity. I thought I knew more about the stock exchange than him. I also suspected he might have conspired with my competitors, with a view to taking over my company."

A member of a financial department in Shanghai, requesting to be unnamed, expressed strong opposition to the idea that Shanghai people are more cautious with their money. "How can people from other provinces say that? When we built bridges over Huangpu River, highways and tunnels around the city as well as Pudong International Airport we never asked for a penny from the state government. And every year, Shanghai provides around 25% of the total state financial income."

## Who you calling a snob?

Around 90% of the surveyed Shanghai people said they were aware that the development of Shanghai was a result of efforts made by local and non-

local people, migrant workers in particular. When asked if Shanghai people in general look down on other people, over 50% said "Yes," around 10% more than those who said "No." And of those who said "No," around 31% said they weren't too sure.

Qian Xueming doesn't understand why Shanghai people have a reputation for being snobbish, saying that looking down on people from other provinces is a common characteristic in China. "Is it rare in other places? Don't city dwellers generally look down on rural people? Don't the rich look down on the poor? People who accuse Shanghai people of looking down on other people have an inferiority complex and are unwilling or afraid to accept the truth."

The survey indicated that Shanghai men are somewhat effeminate, in terms of being more concerned about details, politeness and appearance. They are also "more likely to gossip and spread rumors." However, the four Shanghai women interviewed by *Beijing Today* all said they would still choose Shanghai men as husbands.

"Shanghai men have more style. For instance, if you see a man from Guangzhou wearing a suit, the sense you get is just that he has a lot of money," says Qiu Ying, a staff member of a foreign company. She married a man from Shanghai two months ago. "They are gentlemen. Also, thanks to the modern environment in Shanghai, they're more fashionable."

## Improving the City

More than 95% of the people surveyed said "maintaining public hygiene" was an urgent issue. Over 96% said living communities should be tidy and environmentally friendly. Roughly 90% said the city needed to plant more trees.

The service industry was emphasized by the people surveyed when talking about the city's internationalization process. Problems such as "insufficient service awareness" and "unwillingness to speak *putonghua*" were mentioned by around 90%.

But on the whole, the survey indicated considerable loyalty to the town from its people. Only 33% of the surveyed people said they would choose to move outside Shanghai given the opportunity to live in any other city in China, 20% less than those who refused such an idea firmly. The reason was that most people were "satisfied with every aspect of life in Shanghai, ranging from economy to culture."

Photo / Tony Stone

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China Daily website's "source"

## Who "Murdered" Bill Gates?

By Ivy Zhang

April Fool's Day arrived three days early this year and left *China Daily* and several prominent web sites with egg all over their faces.

On March 29, they reported that Bill Gates had been murdered at a Charity event in Los Angeles. The news spread like wildfire from the *China Daily* website to Sina, Sohu, Yahoo! China and other local web sites, radio stations and news agencies on Saturday morning.

But within a few hours, the web sites were reaching for their retraction statements. *China Daily*, Sina and Sohu admitted the news was false, said they had removed it from their web sites and apologized to Microsoft and their readers.

**"He said he clicked open the CNN website and immediately saw a pop-up webpage. He thought it was breaking news and then edited and posted it without reading it carefully," says the content director of China Daily website.**

As for the source of the fake news, *China Daily* website claimed they got the story from the CNN website. "CNN.com reported on March 28, 2003 (morning of March 29, 2003, Beijing time) that Bill Gates had been murdered in Los Angeles. The news appeared on CNN's web site for about half an hour before it was removed," claimed the *China Daily* website.

"After *China Daily* website translated and reported the news, Sina and Sohu reprinted it and spread the news via short messages for mobile phones. At 12:20 am, March 29, 2003 Beijing time, Microsoft called *China Daily* website and told us the news had been released a year earlier on April 1, 2002," *China Daily* web site's statement continued.

Microsoft has said it does not intend to sue. "The truth was clarified soon," a spokeswoman from H. Line Ogilvy, a public relations agent for Microsoft, told Beijing Today. "We hope the web sites will learn from this lesson. While trying to get the news across fast, they should also pay attention to its accuracy."

### Fooled by fake news

Wang Jianshuo, an IT specialist from Shanghai, was one of many people to be stunned by the news. He posted his story, titled "Bill Gates Murdered by Chinese Media" on his personal webpage on Saturday. Excerpts are below.

This morning, my wife received a phone call from her friend that Bill Gates had been murdered in Los Angeles. Her friend was in a taxi and the radio was reporting the news. The reporter was using a very sorrowful voice and kept interrupting the regular news with updates.

I was completely shocked, as much as I was when I heard about September 11. I went to Sina.com.cn, the largest and most popular website in China,

and there it was in red font on the home page: Bill Gates Murdered in Los Angeles. The same piece of news appeared on Sohu.com and Yahoo! China too.

The news spread quickly. I got three phone calls and four MSN Messenger queries in just half an hour (from 11:30 to 12:00 am). People were spreading the news as quickly as they did when the first plane hit the New York World Trade Center. Thanks to modern technology - SMS, mobile, and MSN Messenger - people told their friends straight away.

After about one hour the rumor ended. Sohu released an announcement that the news was fake. Sina did the same, one and a half hours later.

### China Daily website says sorry

The content director of *China Daily* website who declined to give his name told *Beijing Today* that they wanted to say sorry to web surfers and readers.

"We are young and failed to double check. We were duped," said the content director. "In the future, we'll take measures to avoid the recurrence of such naive mistakes."

*China Daily* website was launched in 1996 and has a reader base of 370,000. Its Chinese international news column draws hundreds of thousands of Chinese readers and its short message services in Chinese reach more than 6,000 people. The average age of editors at the website is 28 years old.

The content director was not on duty on Saturday. He said the website posted the fake news story at 11:08 am. When he received the short message sent from their own website, he was surprised.

"I called my office and asked whether this news was being reported on TV. The editor said no. I hung up the phone, took a taxi to the office and worked on the clarification report," he said.

The person who came up with the news story was a recent college graduate who has been working at chinadaily.com.cn as an editor for one and a half years.

"He said he clicked open the CNN website and immediately saw a pop-up webpage. He thought it was breaking news and then edited and posted it without reading it carefully," says the content director.

The content director attributed the young editor's error to his inexperience. "Any experienced editor would have known it was fake because the time indicated on the webpage was GMT 25:15. But our editor did not notice that."

More than 50 editors at *China Daily* website convened at a meeting on Monday afternoon on enhancing the website's double-check system. A new link has been added to their usual editor-polisher-out process. All breaking news must be reviewed by the deputy director or director before it goes out from now on.

The young editor was heavily fined by the website. The lesson he might have learned is to keep alert at all times because the webpage bearing the fake news "looked exactly like the real CNN page," according to the content director.

## Hong Kong Actor Commits Suicide

(continued from Page 1)

Because it happened on April fools day, the Hong Kong media initially doubted the news until police confirmed it at 8:40 pm that night.

Police found a suicide note at the scene, in which Cheung had written that he had been suffering emotional problems.

A witness told police that Cheung fell onto the canopy of a bus stop and then the iron fence by the roadside before falling to the ground. Because of the buffer, there was no obvious scar on his face. "He looked calm," said the witness who called the police at once.

### Popularity and plaudits

Cheung, 46, was viewed as one of the best singers and actors in Hong Kong. He acted in more than 50 movies and his songs were popular across Asia.

He took second prize when he entered the 1976 ATV Asian Music Contest. In 1981, Cheung released his solo album *The Wind Blows On*, which was a huge hit.

He soon became well known as a film actor as well, with his role in the movie *Farewell My Concubine* which won the Grand Prix at Cannes in 1993.

### Melancholic?

Cheung had complained of stomach pains last year and seldom appeared in public in recent months. The last time he appeared in public was on March 8 when he attended a concert.

It was reported that he had been suffering from melancholia since playing a psychologist in the movie *Inner Senses* last year. Hong Kong's *Apple Daily* said on Wednesday that the emotionally demanding part had taken its toll. Cheung was nominated for Best Actor for *Inner Senses* at the Hong Kong Golden Film Awards due to take place on Sunday.

"I know he had complained of feeling sick a while ago. But after going to the doctor his condition improved," said Kelvin Wong, general manager of the Chinese music division of Universal Music.

Cheung, who revealed that he was gay in 1997, had had a tempestuous 18-year affair with his partner, banker Ho Man Tin and the relationship appeared to be heading for the rocks last year. Ho didn't show up at Cheung's 46th birthday party in September last year and neighbors told police that they often heard quar-

rels and the sound of stuff being thrown around from his house late at night.

### Question about the suicide

Eight hours after the suicide, Ho Man Tin faced the media and denied that he'd split up with Cheung.

He said they had planned to play tennis that day, but before he arrived at the hotel, Cheung had already committed suicide. He said Cheung had suffered from melancholia for a number of years ago and had already tried committing suicide in November last year.

However, *Eastern Daily*, a local newspaper in Hong Kong, said on Wednesday that Cheung had quarreled with Ho just before killing himself.

"According to a witness, Cheung waited for his partner in the Mandarin Oriental Hotel yesterday. Ho appeared at about 4 pm and was accompanied by another man. Ho told Leslie that he wanted to break off the relationship with him, and a quarrel began," said the newspaper.

*Apple Daily*, another newspaper in Hong Kong, said on Wednesday that Cheung had invited his image consultant Mo Hua Bing

for lunch on Tuesday. "He seemed fine," said Mo. "I can't believe this tragedy."

Chen Shufen, Cheung's former agent, told the newspaper that the actor had invited her for a coffee at the hotel on Tuesday, but when she arrived, he was already dead.

### Huge shock

From 9:00 pm on Tuesday to 6:00 am the next day, Hong Kong Commerce Radio Station broadcast Cheung's songs overnight. Other radio stations in Hong Kong also broadcast tributes to the pop star. "Cheung's songs were heard all over Hong Kong," said *Apple Daily*.

On Wednesday, the story dominated Hong Kong's media. *Eastern Daily*, the largest newspaper in Hong Kong, published ten pages about it. "The war in Iraq gives way to Cheung," said Sina.com yesterday.

"As news of Cheung's death emerged, young fans arrived and laid bouquets and cards near the spot where his body was found," said the South China Morning Post on Wednesday.

According to Cheung's elder sister, the funeral will be held on Tuesday next week.



Leslie Cheung in *Farewell My Concubine*

## Journalist Sacked for Critical Comments

By Ivy Zhang

Li Yuxia, a journalist at a telecommunications newspaper, resigned last August claiming she had been forced to leave after writing a negative story about a large Chinese listed company.

She decided to sue her company, *Communications Weekly*, early this year, and her case opened at Beijing Shijingshan People's Court on Tuesday.

Li said she had been forced to resign because the company she worked for "was afraid of upsetting a big advertiser." She is demanding to be given back her job, have her outstanding salary and medical insurance paid and is also demanding compensation.

Li joined *Communications Weekly* newspaper under the administration of *China Electronics Press* three years ago.

On August 15, an article by Li titled *What's Wrong with the Blue Chip Zhongxing Telecom?* was published on ccidnet.com, an IT information and service website. She left the newspaper the next day.

In the article, Li stated that Zhongxing Telecom, one of the largest domestic telecom equipment manufacturers which was listed in Shenzhen in 1997, insisted on issuing H shares in Hong Kong regardless of the interests of shareholders in Shenzhen and Shanghai. As a result, Zhongxing's A shares plunged 9%, one of the heaviest falls in the Shenzhen and Shanghai stock markets.

"I believe my article was true and fair," Li said.

But Li's company wasn't so impressed. It issued a statement saying Zhongxing had approached *Communications Weekly* and asked it not to cover its issue of H shares prior to the event. The newspaper directors clarified at the regular meeting that journalists should not report on it in order to avoid a negative effect on enterprises in the telecom industry.

Zhongxing is a big advertiser in *Communications Weekly*. It puts ads in the paper worth 700,000 to 800,000 yuan every year, according to Li.

The paper claimed the reason Li wrote the article is that her family bought Zhongxing shares. "She wanted to take this chance to vent her dissatisfaction against Zhongxing," the paper said. "She violated the ethics of journalists and submitted a resignation letter in order to avoid being fired."

Li has denied that her family bought any shares in Zhongxing. She's also insisted that she was forced to submit a letter of resignation.

It is common all over the world for newspapers to report favorably about their advertisers. In China, roughly 75% of newspaper revenue comes from

advertising.

"The Chinese media has come to a period when administrative power is in conflict with the market," said Yu Guoming, professor of journalism at Renmin University.

Yu said advertisers have unaccountable influence on the media. For instance, when real estate advertising takes up 60% of a newspaper's total ad revenue, you're not likely to read any negative stories about any real estate companies.

Some newspapers also help listed companies "look nice" to the public and less-educated shareholders can become victims.

"The problem is serious," said Wang Keqin, senior journalist at *China Economy Times*.

Wang has 15 years of journalistic experience. He used to work at *Gansu Economy Daily* based in Lanzhou, capital of Gansu Province.

He published an article titled *Shareholders Robbed at Lanzhou Black Security Market* in early 2001, which shocked the whole nation. Thanks to this report, more than 150 corrupt executives were put in jail and nearly 900 million yuan was retrieved for 20,000 shareholders in Lanzhou.

"It is a journalist's duty to pass the truth to the public and readers, including the illegal operations of listed companies," said Wang.

But it is not an easy job. When Wang investigated the black security market in Gansu, a lot of papers were already preparing some reports on this subject but all of them backed off after they were pressured.



**Chinese scientist Liu Shaochuang planted the national flag of China at the North Pole on Saturday (April 27 2002) after successfully completing a 56-day odyssey to become the first Chinese to reach the pole alone on foot. (04/29/2002) (Xinhua)**

**Chinese scientist Liu Shaochuang has discovered and pinpointed the source of the Mekong River, which passes through more countries than any other river in Asia. (10/28/2002) (People's Daily)**

By Zhao Pu

Try to imagine a geographical version of Indiana Jones and you'd probably come up with someone a bit like Liu Shaochuang. He's battled freezing temperatures, man-eating polar bears and forged new territory in exploration.

As a researcher with the Institute of Remote Sensing Applications (IRSA), part of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Liu has made a number of solo expeditions to the North Pole and sources of the principal rivers of China in the past few years. Some of his exploits have been dangerous, but, as he says, so is riding a bicycle. It's all about calculating the risks.

#### Into the Arctic

Liu's first daring scientific adventure was in 1995 when he was studying for a Ph.D at Wuhan Technical University of Surveying and Mapping. He signed up to take part in China's first scientific Arctic expedition. The seven-member team covered over 200 km to reach the North Pole from Canada. Liu acquired valuable experience from this trip, which helped him in a much more demanding project seven years later.

Last year, Liu set out on a solo Arctic trip, his mission to walk unaided to the North Pole. The Institute of Remote Sensing Application agreed to cover the expenses, as he was to do research work along the way.

He chose to set out in March. "Spring is an ideal season for an Arctic adventure. It is too cold in winter, but some of the ice surfaces may become unstable if the weather is too warm," he says. Liu expected the temperature to be as low as 30 degrees Celsius below zero during the trip.

Physical preparation for the trip began in 2001. Although Liu was taking only the bare essentials he would still have to pull over 160 kg in the sledge he bought from Britain. He trained himself by pulling heavy tires. Every week he also walked from Chaoyang District to Tongzhou and all the way back for 10 hours with a heavy backpack.

On February 22 2002, Liu left Beijing for Moscow to start his solo Arctic trip. After arriving at a small island town called Khatanga, Liu made his way to Cape Arktichewski (Siberia) and launched his 1,000 km trek to the North Pole on March 3.

Most of the necessities he took with him were food and fuel. Liu also brought an Iridium satellite phone to keep in contact with the outside world. He was expected to arrive at his destination around May 1, and meet a camera crew from China Central Television and Phoenix TV.

**You could freeze, drown, or get eaten...**

Liu successfully covered the most challenging part of the journey – latitude 81 degrees to 83 degrees north. This part of the ice melts slightly every summer, and with the effect of ocean currents the ice becomes



# Death-Defying Discoverer

*The source of the Mekong River at Jifu Mountain*



*Liu in his tent on the Arctic trek*

uneven and difficult to cross.

He had to cover 17 km in a straight line every day, but this often involved zigzagging detours of several dozen kilometers to avoid big ice cracks and ice piles as high as two-story buildings. Liu also faced snowstorms, and an overnight temperature which sank below 40 degrees Celsius.

Not that he could sleep that easily anyway. During the first phase of his trek, Liu was stalked by a polar bear. "One day I suddenly found some huge footprints around on my way north, and I knew it was a polar bear," says Liu. Polar bears are man-eaters, and Liu was forced to stay alert night and day as the animal followed him for two days.

"I saw the bear on the second day, he looked at me from behind a pile of ice

and was about to attack." Liu immediately climbed up to higher ground and fired two flares to scare the bear. The hungry animal was not perturbed in the least. So Liu fired a shot in the air from his rifle, and the bear finally took the hint and ran away.

"There are many variables in an Arctic expedition," says Liu. "The ice, weather, equipment and physical condition; any problem with one of these things can terminate an explorer's progress."

On the 18th day when he reached 82 degrees 40 minutes north latitude, both of the two stoves Liu brought with him broke down. A stove is a vital part of the equipment of an Arctic explorer. It's needed to boil water and dry clothes.

Liu had no choice but to return to Khatanga. He contacted the Russian base and got a helicopter to come and get him. Liu repaired his equipment, took a deep breath and prepared to try again. On April 9, a helicopter took Liu to the start point of the second phase of his expedition, 88 degrees north.

When he reached 89 degrees north, Liu was confronted with a wide crevice. He walked around for half a day looking for an easier spot to get across. "I chose a seemingly safer place and knocked the ice with my

ski pole. Then I put my feet on the ice, and all of a sudden it cracked and I fell into the water," says Liu. He had to struggle up onto the ice before his equipment slid in and dragged him down. "Fortunately my sledge was not pulled down into the water, or I would have drowned." It took him over 30 hours to dry his soaked clothes in his tent.

On April 27, 18 days after beginning the second phase of his journey, Liu arrived. The 39-year-old scientist had become the first Chinese adventurer to complete a solo trek on foot to the North Pole.

#### Up the Mekong

Compared with his polar expedition, Liu's trip to the source of the Mekong River in Qinghai Province was obviously less dangerous, though in terms of scientific progress, it was far more important.

Known as the Lancang River in China, the Mekong is one of Asia's many powerful rivers which descend from the Tibetan Plateau. Its valley covers 810,000 square kilometers, where China's southwestern region borders southeastern and southern Asia. It is a continental bridge linking China with a number of other countries.

The exact location of the river source has long been an international geographic mystery. It's been hard to pinpoint due to the harsh geographical environment and the lack of adequate technology. Between the 1860s and the end of the last century, a dozen scientific expeditions attempted to resolve the question. Several hypotheses have been put forward, and the river's length was estimated to be between 4,200 and 4,880 km.

In 1999, Liu made a solo expedition to Zaduo County in Yushu, Tibet Autonomous Prefecture of Qinghai Province, and determined the source of the Lancang River at Jifu Mountain. Last October, Liu retraced the same area and pinpointed the exact spot of the river's source, and also calculated the length of the river at 4,909 kilometers using remote sensing satellite technology.

Liu's discovery made headlines around the world last October. "It's up to 700 kilometers longer than previously calculated in other studies, including those made by the French and British Royal Geographical Societies," said an AFP report.

Liu modestly attributes his discovery to certain basic

advantages; for instance, speaking the same language. "For most foreign explorers, they'll have to have their words translated into Chinese first, and then into Tibetan. Something inevitably gets lost in the translation. For me, it's a lot easier," he says. Also, as an experienced surveyor, he was able to determine the length of the river using cutting-edge mapping technologies that were far more advanced than those available to previous exploration teams.

Before gaining fame by pinpointing the source of the Mekong River, Liu had in 2001 headed a survey on the length of the Yangtze, China's longest river, and found that it is 80 kilometers shorter than believed. He put forward the belief that the Damchu River in northwest China's Qinghai-Tibet Plateau is more likely to be the source of the Yangtze River than the well-known Tuotuo River.

#### Plans in hand

For Liu, expeditions are an inevitable part of his career. "Mankind learns to know the world from expeditions. It was explorers who discovered the new continents and seas. And thanks to the spirit of exploration, big progress can be made in science and technology," says Liu.

"Of course expeditions have dangers, but even riding a bicycle might bring an accident. Everything involves risk. It is important that you realize the looming dangers and find out possible solutions beforehand."

At present Liu is busy preparing his next historic mission: crossing Antarctica. "I'll lead three Chinese scientists across 2,500 kilometers from the South Pole to Zhongshan Station, one of China's two scientific stations in Antarctica," says Liu. They will set out from the South Pole in November 2003.

Another project Liu is working on is determining the length of the Yellow River. This project is expected to be finished by June 2003. After pinpointing the sources and determining the length of the principal rivers in China, Liu will also travel abroad in search of the sources of other big rivers in the world.

"Men have conquered the summit of Chomolungma (also known as Everest) and set foot on the moon. But no one knows which is the longest river in the world. I plan to measure 13 rivers which are over 5,000 kilometers long all over the world. I intend to find the answer to this mystery for the world!"



*A local girl in Zaduo County*



*An Arctic scene*



*Liu's tent*



*Local women in Zazuo County*



*Ice beard  
Photos provided  
by Liu Shaochuang*



*He had to cover 17 km in a straight line every day.*





Bowl used by railroad pioneer, Zhan Tianyou

Photos by Lu Xin

# A Century's History of Studying Abroad

By Iris Miao

An exhibition A Century's History of Studying Abroad is now underway at the newly established National Museum of China. With 400 historical pictures and 300 precious articles, the exhibition is divided into four parts, reflecting the hardships and achievements of students who studied abroad during the past one hundred years.

It is also the first exhibition to open at the National Museum since it was established on February 28 from the merger of the former National Museum of Chinese Revolution and the National Museum of Chinese History.

## An illustrious tradition

The four parts of the exhibition, arranged chronologically, vividly illustrate the difficulties endured by the 19th century pioneers, the contributions students made to China's modern democratic and scientific revolution, the achievements they made during the construction of New China, and the new developments after the inception of China's opening and reform policy in the 1980s.

The pictures and historical articles have been collected from several tens of organizations and individuals, covering almost every aspect of student's lives abroad; from score sheets and diplomas to letters to families and loved ones; from daily utensils to experimental equip-

ment. Many of the exhibits were donated by people who once studied abroad or their families.

That many of the articles have survived the war and turmoil of the past century is something of a miracle. Exhibits such as the vest of Qian Zhongshu a self funded student at Oxford University, May Fourth Movement instigator Hu Shi's diary, the bowl used by railroad engineer Zhan Tianyou when he lived in the United States, the manuscript of Xu Zhimo's poem *Farewell My Cambridge* are all on public display for the first time.

The manuscript of Lu Xun's famous essay, *My Teacher Mr. Fujino*, is another of the exhibits. The *Xuan* paper he wrote on remains fresh and crisp looking, with Lu Xun's small, neat script.

Pan Zhenzhou, curator of the National Museum, says that patriotism and the pursuit of truth were distinctive characteristics of such people; countless stories left by the earlier pioneering students glitter with brilliance of per-

sonality and spirit.

According to the exhibition, the first Chinese to receive systematic western education was Rong Hong, who went to the US to study in 1847, graduating with a diploma of English literature from Yale University. From 1872, the Qing government sent students to the US and Europe successively. A group of 120 teenagers aged 10 to 16 years were the first state sponsored students to be educated abroad.

Later generations of students went abroad to study and brought back with them advanced philosophies and theories, sciences and technologies. Cai Yuanpei, Chen Duxiu, Hu Shi, Qian Xuesen, Li Siguang and Qian Zhongshu, names inextricably bound up in modern Chinese history, are brought to life by the yellowing photos and the articles they wrote and read.

## National Museum exhibitions

Ge Hui, from the National Museum of China Curatorial Office, told *Beijing Today*

that the former National Museum of Chinese Revolution and the National Museum of Chinese History usually planned exhibitions one year in advance.

That this particular exhibition is the first since the merger of the two museums is largely coincidence. The one-month-old National Museum is still adjusting its top-level administrative staff, while the new curator, Pan Zhenzhou, a former deputy minister of culture, has just presided over his first meeting. The merging of particular departments and offices will probably take place in the second half of this year.

In the short term, the two former museums will hold their respective exhibitions as planned, but under the name of the National Museum of China.

Regarding future plans of the National Museum, Ge Hui says that one of the most popular exhibitions staged by the former National Museum of Chinese History was the widely acclaimed *General History of China*, which presented relics from the Neolithic Age to the Qing Dynasty. It was suspended two years ago to make way for renovation work, and now only a small selection of those artifacts remain on display. "The National Museum of China will be sure to represent the general history of China in the future," Ge says.



Nobel Prize medal awarded to physicist Yang Zhenning

## Forbidden City Treasures Tour Japan

By Iris Miao

To mark the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Sino-Japanese Friendship Treaty, an exhibition titled *Treasure from the Forbidden City* started a seven-city, 10-month tour of Japan yesterday.

The 136 pieces comprising the exhibition are drawn from six categories; porcelain, bronze ware, jade and glass ware, lacquer ware, and costume. They cover a time span of 6,000 years, from the Neolithic Age Hongshan Culture through to the late Qing Dynasty.

According to Ma Haixuan of the Palace Museum (Forbidden City) foreign affairs office, the exhibition is like a vivid history lesson that will give Japanese audiences an insight into the origin and development of Chinese civilization.

The jade shovel from Hongshan Culture, the Shang Dynasty *ding*, the painted wooden standing female figure from the Warring States Period, the Tang tricolor camel, the Song Dynasty Jun kiln vase, the blue and white *Xuande* flat square vase with the dragon and sea design from the Ming Dynasty and the *Kangxi* enamel sunflower plate from the Qing Dynasty all embody the profundity and richness of the Chinese civilization.

Meanwhile artifacts such as Ming Dynasty Empress Dowager Xiaoduan's phoenix coronet, Emperor Qianlong's copy of Wang Xizhi's calligraphy, Emperor Qianlong's armor and corselet, and Qing Empress Dowager Cixi's portrait on canvas reveal details of imperial life.

Due to its extreme fragility, the 500-year-old phoenix coronet of Empress Dowager Xiaoduan, inlaid with numerous jewels and over 5,000 pearls, might never again be exhibited abroad.

Besides an insurance

premium of US \$44.39 million taken out by the Japanese organizer of the exhibition, Nichhu Geikyo (Japan-China Artists Association), the Palace Museum has sent several specialists to oversee the tour and ensure the safety



Emperor Dowager Xiaoduan's coronet

of the treasures.

According to Ma Haixuan, the exhibitions of Forbidden City treasures are immensely popular with Japanese audiences. Last year, a similar exhibition was held to mark the 30th anniversary of the normalization of Sino-Japanese relations. The total number of visitors exceeded 380,000,



Northern Qi (550-577) period stone Buddha

and in one exhibition hall in Tokyo alone, there were 120,000 visitors over the 18 days of the exhibition. Ma says she expects this year's exhibition will be equally successful.

The exhibition is currently on show in Sapporo, and will travel to Hokkaido, Nagata, Ishikawa, and Kagoshima.

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By Yu Shanshan

Shi Qing, retired professor of Chinese at Renmin University and a dedicated architecture buff, was among the thousands of amateur architecture experts that went to the International Convention Center last week to check out proposed designs for the National Stadium, the main stadium for the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. Before turning in her vote for the best plans on Sunday afternoon, she said, "This is another benefit of Beijing winning the bidding of the Olympics — beautiful designs like these don't turn up in groups every day."

The massive, 80,000-seat stadium will be situated in the south of the Olympic Green and will be the venue for the opening and closing ceremonies as well as the track and field events of the 2008 Olympics.

From March 26 to 31, the designs put forth by the 13 pre-qualified candidates for the International Architecture Scheme Competition for the Conceptual Design of the National Stadium, which started last December, were the stars of a free exhibition in the fourth and fifth exhibition halls of the International Convention Center. Viewers were encouraged to vote for their three favorite designs and offer other comments.

The six-day show generated a lot of public enthusiasm, drawing over 10,000 visitors to the convention center.

The day before public viewings started, an evaluation panel made up of 13 architects and experts from five countries made their own selection, calling the plans designated B11, B12 and B08 the best.

Following basic design requirements, all 13 plans feature retractable roofs, 20,000 temporary seats and the capacity for long-term, multifunctional use, while upholding the three main themes of the Beijing Olympics — people, high technology and "green", meaning environmental protection.

The public's favorites were announced on Monday afternoon by the Beijing Municipal Planning Commission (BMPC), the organizer of the competition, nearly exactly echoing the panel's decisions. Visitors were asked to name their three top choices, and of the nearly 6,000 ballots collected, 3,506 people named B11, 3,472 named B12 and 3,454 picked B08. The commission will make its final decision early this month, with construction of the facility slated to begin on December 24.

#### Fresh looks

Arguably the most radical and fresh design is that of plan B11, a

**"This is another benefit of Beijing winning the bidding of the Olympics — beautiful designs like these don't turn up in groups every day."**



B12, Beijing Institute of Architectural Design & Research



B08, Japan's AXS SAWTO Inc. and the Architectural Design and Research Institute of Tsinghua University

simple yet abstract structure that resembles a bird's nest. The design was submitted by a consortium of the Swiss firm Herzog & de Meuron Architekten AG and the China Architecture Design & Research Group (CAG). It received winning votes from eight of the 13 expert panelists, emerging as the top selection of the evaluation team.

"The design is a perfect combination of elegance and simplicity," said Guan Zhaoye, chairman of the evaluation panel, at a March 25 press conference held at the convention center. "Every part of the stadium is functional," he added.

Li Xinggang, a CAG architect who worked on the design, called the building a radical idea with roots in the arenas of ancient Rome. "People's main motivation in going to a stadium is to watch a sports event, more than just appreciating its architectural design," he said. "Olympic spirit is the most emphatic statement of our plan."

With those ideas in mind, they managed to create an innovative structure that conspicuously lacks the large metal and concrete swatches and digital screens that show up in nearly all modern

stadiums.

Built on a gentle rise, the stadium's seating stands are designed to look like a red bowl, with an undulating composition of high and low elevations that counters the bulk of the formation with a dramatic, sweeping form and offers all spectators good views. The outside structural elements are mutually supportive and converge into an uninterrupted, open grid-like formation, in which the facade, stairs and roof are integrated.

This revealing design is intended to focus attention on the spectators and the events on the field. According to Li, "From outside the building, people moving inside will appear to be part of the structure."

#### Remarkable roofs

Struggling to make a real breakthrough in design because of the limitations imposed by the retractable roof requirement, the architects at the Beijing Institute of Architectural Design & Research came up with the idea of going vertical.

Their design, designated B12, has a "suspending retractable roof" created with a huge helium balloon that can rise from the

rooftop to 200 meters in the air. This movable element would not only add drama to the opening and closing ceremonies, but also provide the owner with a long-term stable source of income by utilizing the balloon as a massive billboard and a floating platform for sightseeing and recreation facilities, like bars.

"Japan has pioneered many developments in retractable roofs," said Hu Shaoxue, one of architects in a joint venture of Japan's AXS SAWTO Inc. and the Architectural Design and Research Institute of Tsinghua University. According to their plan, designated B08, two half-moon-shaped glass sections in the center of a larger roof can be opened and rotated in a process the firm has dubbed "circumgyrating". The clever design would allow the roof to open fully in only 20 minutes, using around 200 yuan of electricity.

Another interesting response to the roof requirement was put forth by the Australian firm HOK Sport & Venue & Event Pty. Their design, B01, has publicly accessible walkways along the edges of its top, intended to make the structure

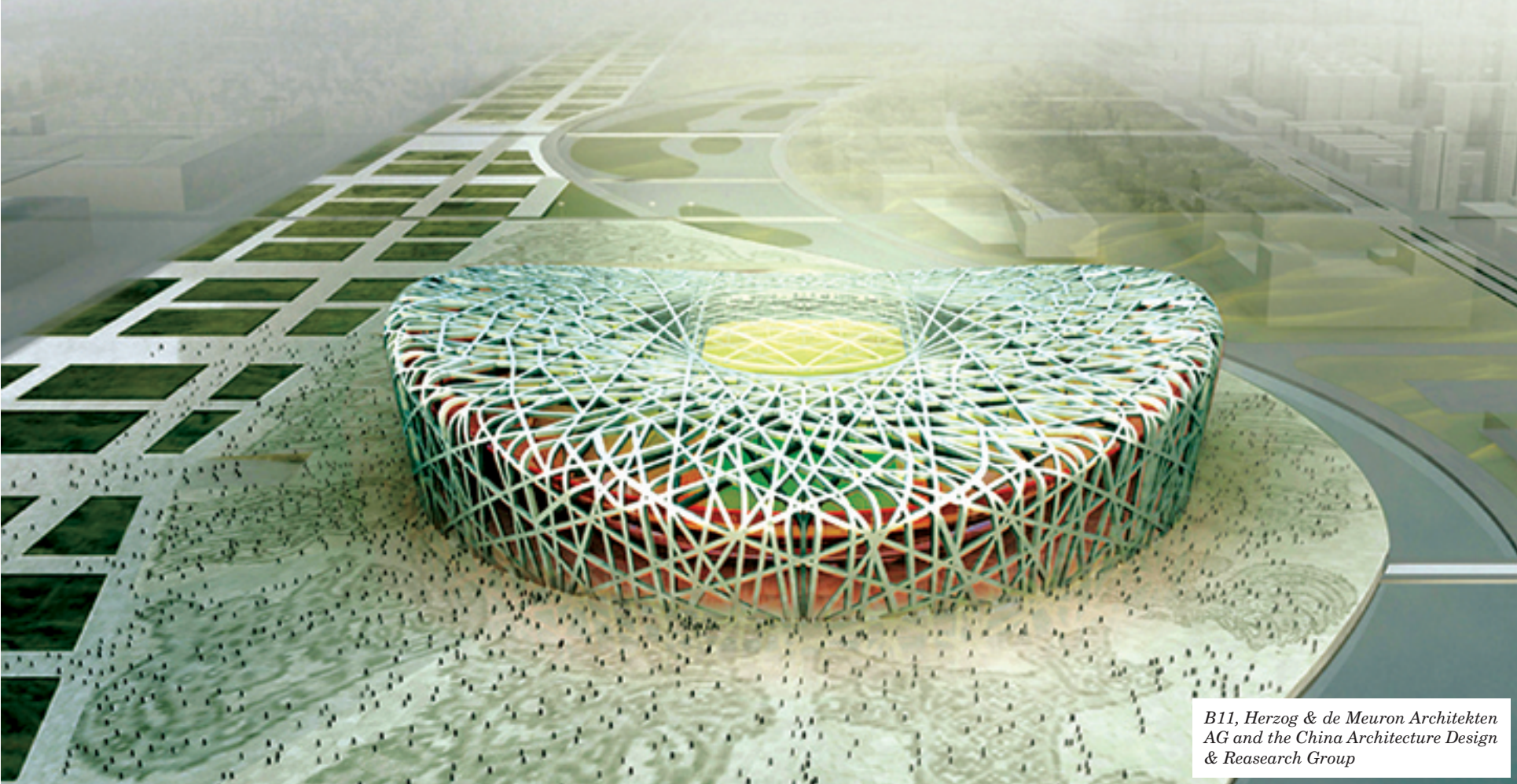
a long-term tourism site offering birds-eye views of the capital. **More than one way to be Eastern**

The Australian design, called "China's Bridge to the 21st Century," is also a member of the contingent of plans that emphasize the Chinese context of the 2008 Olympics. Not only is the building's roof accessible, but it also echoes the look of ancient bridges found around this country. Other plans with a distinctly Chinese flavor draw inspiration from opening lotus flowers and traditional *siheyuan* (quadrangle) houses.

Eastern aesthetics are also manifest in plans that tone down the glass and steel by echoing shapes from nature, such as pearls, clouds, flowers and leaves. The abstraction evident in the "super-modern" design of B11 is intended to evoke emotions associated with ancient Chinese philosophy. "It makes me think of Laozi," said urban planner Liu Shaolian when he visited the exhibition last Wednesday.

"There's more than one way to be Eastern, and with this project we are starting to open some alternative architectural paths," Guan Zhaoye told *Beijing Today*.

## Designing the Olympics of the Future



B11, Herzog & de Meuron Architekten AG and the China Architecture Design & Research Group

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# Ancient Opera to be Staged in Beijing

By Dong Nan  
Number One Scholar Zhang Xie, an opera dating back some 800 years, will be performed here at the end of this month by the China Beijing Opera Academy.  
The opera was written by unknown composers during the Southern Song Dynasty. As the earliest and best-preserved example of traditional Chinese opera script, the piece, described as "the first opera of China," is a priceless treasure of Chinese opera history.  
The opera tells a simple story about loyalty and conscience. "Number One Scholar Zhang Xie was born in the rudimentary period of traditional opera. At that time, five performers took on different roles according to the script's demands to play all the characters in the opera," says Wu Ji-ang, president of China Beijing Opera Academy.  
"We hope to attract the audience with the opera's simpleness, and evoke the essence of traditional opera," he said.  
The opera is directed by renowned director Lin Zhaohua, and features celebrated Beijing Opera performers Jiang Qihu, Li Haiyan and Liu Jinquan. Jiang Qihu (top) and Li Haiyan



## Lady in the Dark — Broadway to Beijing

By Dong Nan  
Before Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Cats* slinks onto the Beijing stage next month, another musical, *Lady in the Dark*, is being performed at the Century Theatre tonight.  
The musical premiered on Broadway in 1941, winning rave reviews. It was revived in London in 1997 and won an award for "best musical" of the year.  
Telling a story of a modern woman's attempt to reconcile the conflicting demands of her personal and professional lives, the story is bound to strike a chord with young professionals in today's China.  
The Beijing performance features two internationally renowned Broadway stars, Marsha Mercant and Michael Sterling.  
"I have always wanted to come to China, but never thought that it would be to take part in such an event as this, which marks a huge milestone for China and for me," Michael Sterling, who rose to fame playing Jean Valjean, in *Les Miserables*, said in a media release.  
"Any good theatrical experience should take the audience on a journey of self discovery and I think *Lady in Dark* has the power to do just that," according to Marsha Mercant, acclaimed as one of the best performers of the role of Lisa Elliot, heroine of *Lady in the Dark*.  
On the upcoming staging of *Cats* in Beijing, Mercant told *Beijing Youth Daily*, "Of course, it is great. But the key is that Chinese must have musicals of their own." Photos by Huang Liang



## Take a CIA Journey with The Recruit

By Nebula Dong  
Local cinema goers are getting the inside scoop on CIA secrets. *The Recruit*, a new American spy thriller screening in Beijing gives an unprecedented insiders account of the CIA's secret training ground in the US state of Virginia, the Farm.  
James Clayton (Colin Farrell), a brilliant young man, is sent to a secret CIA training camp, where he discovers just how complex and dangerous the job can really be. Just when James starts to question his role and decides to "wash out", his teacher, Burke (Al Pacino) taps him for a special assignment to root out a mole.  
Espionage fans are likely to have the old maxims of the mysterious agency, "trust no one" and "nothing is as it seems," rooted firmly in their minds by the time they come out of the cinema into the light of day.  
The movie has picked up a string of favorable reviews in the US. "Fast-paced and well-acted" according to the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, and "The Recruit is a slick, well-made thriller with appealing stars, sharp action, an intriguing premise" says the *Cincinnati Enquirer*.

## A Russian Night Out

By Dong Nan  
Russian classics and poems mean more than simply music and literature to most people in China over the age of 50. Many people in this age group went to the USSR to study in the 1950s and '60s, and many others have memories of Russian experts who came to work in China in the years after the founding of the People's Republic.  
A concert at the Great Hall of the People last Friday and Saturday, under the title Russian Romantic Poem Symphony Concert, brought a night of nostalgia for those in the audience.  
The concert was divided into four

themes: nature, life, love and heroism. Actors Song Chunli, Yang Zaibao and Yang Lixin recited immortal Russian lyrical poems and prose by Pushkin, Mikhail Lermontov and Maxim Gorky, to the accompaniment of the most moving pieces by Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff.  
Many in the audience openly shed tears on hearing those familiar poems so reminiscent of their youth.  
The musical component was provided by the Novosibirsk Philharmonic Orchestra, of whom *Discovery* once commented after a concert. "Nobody can compare with the great Russian orchestras performing their own music!"

## WORLDWIDE



### Nick Nolte Comes Clean About Staying Clean

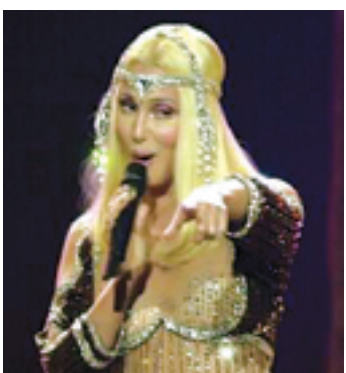
Nick Nolte decided years ago that when it came to the press "the best approach to talking about my personal life was to lie."  
But there was no hiding when he got himself arrested "dazed and drooling" in September after an erratic drive down the Malibu coast and had his disheveled, wild-haired mug shot plastered on newspapers around the world.  
There is something refreshing about Nolte's world weariness these days, his candid introspection, his struggle to cope with "real life," his impatience with playing the Hollywood game.  
"I've always said I had substance abuse problems. It is something you deal with and you take care of it and you keep it under control," the gravel-voiced actor said wryly. (Reuters)



### Another "American Idol" Kicked Off Fox Show

It's more than just a talent contest. The would-be pop stars competing on the Fox reality hit *American Idol* seem these days to be running into trouble over past personal scandals.  
A month after Fox disqualified a singer from the show amid revelations that she had posed topless on an Internet porn site, the network said on Monday it was expelling another finalist, Corey Clark, who is facing trial on misdemeanor charges of battery against his sister and resisting arrest.  
Fox said in a statement that Clark "withheld information about a prior arrest which, had it been known, might have affected his participation in the show." (Reuters)  
**Cher Thanks Mom for Sounds Career Advice**  
Cher has her mother to thank for giving her sound career advice.  
The singer-actress says her mother gave her three pieces of advice: if you're going to steal something, steal something big; if it doesn't matter in five years,

it doesn't matter at all; and she may not be the prettiest or smartest or most talented, but when you put everything together, it's a pretty good package.  
Cher says she thinks about her mother's words of wisdom all the time, adding that her only regret in her 40-year career was turning down a part in *Thelma and Louise*. (AP)



Cher on stage

### Madonna Pulls Anti-War Video for 'Life'

Madonna has decided to withdraw the violent, anti-war video for her new single *American Life* out of respect for the troops fighting in Iraq.  
In a statement posted on her web site Monday, the singer said the video was filmed before the war started and was not appropriate to air at this time.  
"Due to the volatile state of the world and out of sensitivity and respect to the armed forces, who I support and pray for, I do not want to risk offending anyone who might misinterpret the meaning of this video," Madonna said. (AP)

### Hugh Grant Says Hates Acting

British film star Hugh Grant may be Prince Charming on the screen but he says he is secretly a cad and hates acting so much that he's ready to take some time off, meet a nice girl and settle down.  
"I'm ready, baby. I need to get married and have children," Grant, 42, told *Vanity Fair* magazine.  
"Put it this way," he said. "If I went to a party tonight and bumped into a fantastic girl, whereas 3 years ago it might have led to a short-term relationship, now I definitely keep my thoughts open to the idea of settling down. Definitely." (Reuters)



Hugh Grant

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Photos by Cui Hao

By Lisa Huang

Whether in the form of combat boots, berets or camo pants, army clothes have a fashion appeal that goes beyond their simple lines and colors. Even in these days of war, today's youth like the military look. One place to zero in on some authentic army issue fashion is Chitu, a store in Xijiekou.

The shop was opened five years ago by a group of several young people, one of whom emphasized to *Beijing Today* that even though they sell military-related goods, they do not endorse war. Regardless of

## Sign O' the Times

their position, the store offers a wide range of objects that provide an authentic martial feel or look.

Helmets, gas masks, camouflage-pattern clothes and even military uniforms cram every cranny of the shop. Items of interest to military collectors are German soldiers' silver canteens (290 yuan each), and a US M65 wind jacket (990 yuan). That classic piece of clothing was designed in 1965

to be so bombproof it can resist temperatures up to 400°C. Customers can round out a militant outfit with boots in either leather (350 yuan per pair) or camouflage cloth (150 yuan per pair).

Two glass counters display small items, such as armbands, epaulets, and badges from the forces of many different countries. Interested consumers can check the store's web site at [www.chituclub.com](http://www.chituclub.com).



**Where:** 4, Baochan Hutong, Xijiekou Nandajie, Xicheng  
**Open:** 9: 30 am - 6: 30 pm **Tel:** 6611 8762

## Conventional Subjects, Funky Materials



"Deer" leather painting, 180 yuan

By Salinda

A little store, opened by two young women just three months ago, stands out among its competition in the Houhai area in part because of its auspicious name, Fenghuang Zuo-fang, which translates to "phoenix workshop".

While the store specializes in paintings, there are no traditional Chinese scrolls or paper materials to be found. Instead, on offer are artworks done on wood, leather, or cloth, such as batiks or zharan paintings.

Batiks and zharan works mostly come in just blue and white, and the pieces can be used as tablecloths or wall hangings. Basic wax paintings sell for 30 yuan to 60 yuan each, while the more complex zharan paintings go for 120 yuan to 180 yuan. Creating zharan pieces is a pain-staking process of first embroidering, then waxing and dyeing, that makes them richer, more intricate and more textured than normal batik works.

Also in the store's collection are paintings on leather that depict scenes from life in Mongolia, such as shepherd girls, sheep, horses and yurts on the grassland. Unusual pieces include a leather painting shaped like a mirror with a wood base (260 yuan), and one covered in pictographic characters (60 yuan).

Wood is the base material for four paintings crafted with a soldering iron. Each one shows a scene from the lives of southern minority people and they go for 150 yuan to 180 yuan each.

The store achieves the feel of an informal gallery with a couple of wood tables and chairs set up so customers can comfortably check out the merchandise.

**Where:** 9 Ya'er Hutong, north of Yinding bridge, Houhai, Xicheng **Open:** 11 am - 9 pm **Tel:** 13910 166304



Hanging leather painting, 80 yuan



Mirror-like leather painting, 260 yuan



Zharan work, 120 yuan



Wood painting, 150 yuan

Photos by Peng Jianwei

## Couple of the Cloth

By Lisa Huang

In this age of mass production, true distinction can be hard to find. Fortunately, not everyone has forgotten the simple pleasures of things made by hand. Shoppers looking for the warm, human and unique feel of hand-made goods should check out the new store Yibufang, which means "ethnic minority clothes shop", in the bustling Yaxiu Market.

The store was opened only one month ago by a husband and wife



Linen necklaces, 10 yuan each



Fish bags, 25 yuan each

Photos by Cui Hao

team who also design all of the products on sale. Most items are made of hand-made linen, which has a coarse look and a loose, comfortable feel. The cloth is not only hand-woven in looms, but also hand-colored using natural plant-based dyes.

Among the signature pieces are a range of linen tablecloths (160 yuan each) that have colorful swatches of embroidered silk in their centers. Similar silk pieces can also adorn made-to-order upholstery for sofas, window curtains, or cushions

(25 yuan each). Other items include book covers (40-50 yuan each), a great way to make a favorite book that much nicer to hold, and small bags that resemble fish (25 yuan each), auspicious symbols in traditional Chinese lore.

The store also offers minority-style clothing and scarves, and its owners can make clothes and other items to meet customers' special orders.

**Where:** No.3226, Yaxiu Clothes Market, Sanlitun, Chaoyang **Open:** 9:30 am - 7:30 pm

## The Price of Style

By Salinda

Home decoration can be a forum for making all sorts of statements, from "I am artistic" to "I am totally loaded." A good place to get the furniture and accessories to make that kind of statement is the store Zi Xiang Ge on the second floor of COFCO Plaza.

This shop, also called the Purple Collection, uses an unusual method to call attention to itself. There is no name hanging over the door to the store - instead, the three characters of its name are projected in purple light onto the floor at the entrance.

Items on sale include imported tin household utensils like those used in the past by the French royalty family, including tin cans (1,200 yuan), tin wine holders (6,800 yuan) and tin candleholders (9,000 yuan). Classic style is also available: an oil lamp that goes for a regal 5,000 yuan.

Some items with a less formal feel are made of bamboo, such as a simple, wide, hollow tube of bam-

boo (170 yuan) that can be used to hold pens or other little desk items. A candleholder with a wooden fish decoration (135 yuan) offers a whimsical air.

A range of interesting items is made of rattan, a kind of grass grown in the Philippines that has an attractive brown look and is both durable and airy. While rattan furniture pieces are rustic, they are hardly inexpensive, with a full sofa set including two couches, a tea table and a carpet fetching 38,000 yuan.

More reasonable prices can be found on items such as glass dinnerware and brightly colored candles.

**Where:** C228-230, COFCO Plaza, Jianguomennei Dajie, Dongcheng **Open:** 9 am - 9 pm **Tel:** 8511 3575

Candleholders, 9,100 yuan  
Photo by Aily

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By James Liu

One of the best things about Spring may be the sudden return of color. From trees and flowers to people's clothes, the drab look of winter melts away. That's true at the market too, in arguably most spectacular and tasty form with the arrival of luscious, fresh strawberries.

These little fruits are treasured as much for their bright red color as their sweet, distinctive flavor and rich fragrance. In the Beijing market, their prices can vary wildly, going for as little as six yuan a kilogram up to 40 yuan for domestic versions and more than that for imports. Therefore, it is important to know how to tell a good berry to make sure you get the most taste for your money. To get the scoop on strawberries, *Beijing Today* interviewed Wang Zepin, a grower at the Xiaotangshan Agricultural Model Garden.

The strawberries sold in local markets are mainly produced in Liaoning, Shandong, Heilongjiang, and Hebei prov-



One of the glories of spring is bebies of strawberries, prized for their bright color and sweet taste. Below, we offer some suggestions for where and how to buy the best berries, and then what to do with them.

## Strawberry Fields Forever

inces, according to Wang, sales manager and bio-technician of the company. "It's hard to say where the best berries are bred, since everywhere plants the same four species, *mingxing*, *fengxiang*, *dasai*, and *tutela*," he added.

Of those varieties, *fengxiang* has the best texture. These berries normally have cone-like shapes, bright red color and are mid-sized. Because the seeds for *fengxiang* berries were originally imported from Japan, their prices can be higher than the other three varieties. "Generally, the wholesale price for *fengxiang* strawberries is 6 yuan or so for one kilogram," Wang told *Beijing Today*.

Mingxing berries, imported from the US, are larger and easy to store, but less tasty. They have an orange-red color and an elliptical shape. *Dasai* strawberries are the largest of the lot and are normally deep red. *Tutela* is a similar breed, imported from Spain, but these berries are relatively rare on the local market.

"The fruit is rich in vitamin C, a natural souring agent that keeps them from being too sweet. Strawberries that are exceptionally sweet might have been injected with saccharin," Wang warned. "Also some berry growers use cytokinin (a chemical that

accelerates cell division) in order to get bigger fruits, which can then be sold at higher prices." One way to distinguish such suped-up fruits is that they look freakishly big and unbalanced, without any nipples and brown hair on the skin.

Wang's company, Tianyi Bio-engineering, cultivates a type of berry imported from the US, which they supply mainly to Carrefour stores and the Xidan and Beichen supermarkets. Though they sold for 100 yuan per kilogram during Spring Festival, their price has recently fallen to a more reasonable 20 yuan.

Below are some of Wang's recommendations for proper purchasing and storage of strawberries to make sure you get the most out of their great color and rich flavor:

1. Since strawberries do not ripen after they are picked, select only those with a fresh, shiny look and bright red color. Check that the green stems also look fresh and not wilted.

2. Do not wash the strawberries until shortly before serving them because berries are highly perishable,

and the extra water causes their cells to break down faster. After washing, pat strawberries dry before removing their stems.

3. To refrigerate berries, arrange them in a single layer on top of some paper towels and put them in the fridge shortly after purchasing them. Strawberries should be eaten within three or four days of purchase. Berries that have passed their prime lose their fresh appearance and are drained of most of their water content.

Here are two recipes to celebrate the arrival of strawberry season in style:

### Savory Strawberry Soup

#### Ingredients:

1 pint (1/2 liter) fresh strawberries, hulled; 1 small clove garlic, finely minced; 1 tbsp lemon or lime zest; 1 tbsp light soy sauce; 2 1/2 tbsp *mirin* (Japanese sweet wine); 2 tbsp diced fresh avocado

#### Procedure:

Combine all ingredients in a blender

except the avocado. Blend on low speed until thoroughly pureed. Chill at least two hours before serving.

Pour into serving bowls, and garnish with diced avocado. Makes two cups (480 ml) or two small servings.

### Strawberry Sorbet

#### Ingredients:

1 pint (1/2 liter) fresh strawberries, hulled; 1 tbsp lemon juice; 20 pitted dates; 1/2 ripe banana; 4 small sprigs of mint leaves

#### Procedure:

1. Wash strawberries and put them into the blender with the lemon juice. Blend until thoroughly pureed. You may have to stop the machine a few times to redistribute strawberries.

2. Add dates and banana and blend until thoroughly pureed.

3. Pour into a metal loaf pan and freeze. To serve, remove pan from freezer and allow to stand at room temperature for 10 minutes. Then scoop into the blender or food processor and process briefly.

4. Spoon into long stemmed wine glasses or attractive dessert bowls and garnish with a sprig of mint. Makes two cups (480 ml) or four servings.



## Leavened Labor of

## Love

By Helen Hong

In New York, a bagel with "schmere" might be the favored breakfast, but the round breads have yet to really catch on in this city. That is true too for the major local purveyor of bagels, Mrs. Shanen's. In the words of owner Chen Lizhen, "We are the biggest secret in the city."

Chen was born in Taiwan, but as a child her family immigrated to New York. There she developed a full-on addiction to bagels. When she came to China to work in 1989, she was struck by the lack of her favorite bread product in Beijing and set her mind on resolving the problem by creating her own company. Through the assistance of a second-generation bagel maker and lots of trial and error, Chen finally mastered the skill of crafting "perfect" bagels.

Then, in 1996, she teamed up with a local friend, Shan En, to set up Mrs. Shanen's, China's first bagel factory. In the process, they fell in love and got married.

The factory includes a small store and eatery, decorated by the couple. Comfortable chairs and tables, flowers and fruits, a porcelain collection and light music make the little space a great place to relax and enjoy the fruits of Chen and Shan's labors.

To ensure the top quality of their bagels, they use only American wheat, pure filtered water and pesticide-free local vegetables. Mrs. Shanen's bagels have that right combination of crispy crust and chewy center created from the two-step process of boiling then baking.

Bagels come in over 20 varieties, from the traditional, like plain, sesame and onion, to more nouveau versions like blueberry. Depending on size and type, they range in price from 2.5 yuan to 8 yuan each. Pizza bagels, artisan bagels and bagel chips are also on offer, again priced according to size, but mostly going for 15 yuan or less. The store sells a line of plain and flavored cream cheese, the perfect bagel topping.

The loving care the couple puts into all their products is especially clear in a line of mini bagels and teething bagels they created to give to their infant daughter. While bagels are still their specialty, their company has expanded to offer a wide range of fine baked goods and other prepared foods, supplied to five-star hotels and specialty markets around Beijing and in other Chinese cities.

**Add:** behind Building 13 in San Jiefang (next to the Huihai supermarket), Jiuxianqiao, Chaoyang **Open:** 8 am - 8 pm **Tel:** 6435 9561



Photos by Cui Hao

## Jazz Club Is All That

By James Liu

Though it is not very conspicuous, hidden behind a pedestrian overpass on the East Third Ring Road, the CD Jazz Club has found a consistent clientele since it opened its doors last August. The establishment is a spin-off of its neighbor, the rock-oriented CD Café, and follows the same business pattern by providing top live music with good drinks and food. "Some of the cocktails we serve are cheaper than those on Sanlitun Bar Street," Yang Haitao, manager of the club, told *Beijing Today*.

The main draw, however, is the music. It is the only joint in the capital that offers music buffs consistent chances to catch quality jazz. The band led by Liu Yuan (left), takes the bar's stage at 10 pm every Friday and Sunday evening, with other numbers performing regularly, as well as some special guests.

Whether there is a show or not, there

is always food. Offerings include the house special tuna salad (25 yuan), and the king-sized ham and egg sandwich (30 yuan). This sandwich is not only very filling, but also well put together with a nice mixture of textures and tastes.

The extensive drinks menu offers a variety of wines and classic and creative cocktails, with prices ranging from 20 yuan for a bottle of beer to thousands of *kuai* for a bottle of Hennessy XO.

According to Yang, over half the customers are expats and the rest local jazz fans. Entry costs 30 yuan from Thursday to Saturday, but falls to nothing during the rest of the week, even when bands take the stage.

**Add:** South of the west (main) gate to the Agriculture Exhibition Center, Dongsanhuan Lu, Chaoyang **Open:** 6 pm - 2:30 am **Tel:** 6505 8288 **Average cost:** 30 yuan per person and up



## Much More Than Tea and Crackers

By James Liu

China is a country of tea, and its popularity is so strong that it not only is used as a drink, but also shows up as an ingredient in some dishes in southern China. Fresh tea picked before Qingming festival (the festival of Pure Brightness, on April 5 this year) is considered the best. Tea used for cooking comes in two forms, fresh leaves and dried ones.

In the hands of Hong Kong-born chef Stanley Yuan, green tea, black tea, red tea, and oolong tea can all become tasty parts of gourmet dishes. All this month, tea and food lovers have a chance to taste his concoctions during a special promotion at the Summer Palace restaurant in the China World Hotel.

Among his best tea creations is bean



curd with Dongding oolong tea (28 yuan), made with a tea from the mountains of Taiwan with a taste that blends black tea and light honey. Cooking bean curd in this tea infuses it with a flowery fragrance and light, yet complex flavor. Another delicate dish is pan-fried shark's fin and egg white, again cooked

with Dongding oolong tea (80 yuan).

As part of the promotion, diners can select a tea-themed set menu that goes for 300 yuan per person, not counting surcharge. The ten-course meal includes a sampling of cold dishes, shrimp, shark fin, roasted pigeon and fried rice tea pudding, but is only available to groups of ten diners.

To highlight the tea theme, two traditional tea ceremonies will be performed during dinnertime, and high-quality teas will be available for purchase, albeit at equally high prices.

**Add:** Summer Palace, Second floor, China World Hotel, No. 1 Jianguomen Waidajie, Chaoyang **Open:** 11:30 am - 1:30 pm, 5:30-9:30 pm **Tel:** 6505 2266 ext. 34 **Average cost:** 100 yuan per person and up



## Music

## Stones Cancel Concert

The Rolling Stones will not be playing their scheduled concert tonight. The promoters of the show will hold a press conference in the near future to give details on possible rescheduling and the handling of ticket refunds.

## Light Tunes

Performed by the Light Troupe of the China National Song and Dance Ensemble, the program includes the Japanese work *The Spring of the Northern Nation*, Strauss' *The Blue Danube Waltz*, as well as songs by vocal soloists, including *The Same Songs, Beautiful Spanish Maidens*, and *Memories*.

**Where:** Concert Hall of China National Library, Zhongguancun Nadajie **When:** April 6, 2:30 pm **Admission:** 30-200 yuan **Tel:** 8854 5731

## Exhibitions



A painting in Great Han Series

## Great Han Series

New works by Wang Lifeng, whose abstract paintings contain many readable signals.

**Where:** Red Gate Gallery, Dongbianmen Watchtower, Chongwenmen **When:** April 5-30, 10 am - 5 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6525 1005



Painting by Fang Tianyuan

## Fragment of Cities

Art works by Fang Tianyuan, featuring people, the environment and cities, focusing on the feelings of urban people in modern times.

**Where:** Millennium Gallery, Diyang Building, 2 Dongsanhuan Beilu **When:** April 5-16, 9 am - 6 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8453 6193



Hometown by Zhao Shuodong

## Five Artists

## Oil Painting Exhibition

Works by five young artists, featuring life and nature in Tibet, landscapes from water villages in southern China and scenes from Beijing's hutong.

**Where:** Da A Oil Painting Studio, No. 42 Beiwalu, Xibalizhuang, Haidian **When:** April 1 - May 1, 10 am - 10 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 13501 253020



Cloud by Li Xiaoke

## Collection Exhibition

This exhibition features works by artists from Beijing, Hubei, and Tibet.

**Where:** Creation Gallery, north end of Ritan Donglu **When:** April 7-18, 10 am - 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8561 5750.

## Painting Exhibition

A show of paintings by Czech artist Joska Skalník, which stand out with

strong colors and a surrealist feel.

**Where:** Jintai Art Museum, 1 Nongzhan Nanlu **When:** April 4-13, 10 am - 4 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2223



Playing by Ma Haifang

## Exhibition of Ink and Color Paintings

Over 50 ink and color paintings by Niu Zhiye, Ma Haifang, Zhang Lijun, Wang Shengcai and Zhang Zhenhua.

**Where:** New Center Gallery, 136 Nanchizi Dajie **When:** April 5-30, 9 am - 5 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6528 9103

## Tibetan Works

Lu Tianning and Yu Xiaodong have lived in Tibet for a long time, researching Tibetan religion and culture and visiting all the temples and small villages they can find. The materials in their works come from nature and Tibetan folk customs.

**Where:** Qin Gallery, Huaweili Enjoy Paradise1-1E (North of Beijing Curio City) Chaoyang **When:** April 10-30, 9:30 am - 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8779 0461

## Sports

## Beijing Rugby 7s

Beijing will host the second annual Beijing 7s tournament. Building on last year's event, 16 of the world's top rugby — playing countries will come to Beijing for two days hot of rugby action. Tickets go for 100 yuan for standard ground entry for both days, or 400 yuan for a premium ticket that includes food, beer and soft drinks.

**Where:** Olympic Stadium **When:** April 5-6 **Tel:** 13641 210438 **Email:** david@orienz.com

## From Daheishan to the Walled village

From Black mountain, walk up a farm trail through chestnut orchards, climb to a ridge, then stop for a break and admire the view of the mountain behind and the Great Wall to the north. Then we'll cross a river and visit an old military store set into the rock face. Next, we'll head north through the Great Wall up an ancient trail to a walled village.

**Where:** Huairou, north of Beijing **When:** April 16, meet 8:30 am outside Starbucks at Lido Hotel, or 9 am at Capital Paradise front gate, return 4:30 pm **Admission:** adults 150 yuan, children 100 yuan **Tel:** 13701 003694 **Email:** bjhikers@yahoo.co.uk

## Lecture

## Talk/Slide Show: The Great Walk

One of the first people to document a journey along the entire length of the Great Wall, Argentinean photojournalist Diego Azubel spent 15 months walking from the western end of the wall to the Bohai Gulf on China's east coast. His beautiful slide presentation of his trip *The Great Walk of China* will take you along on his awe-inspiring journey across vast terrain and remarkable scenery along the 4,000 kilometer wall. Azubel will be showing a number of his prints, which will be available for purchase.

**Where:** Lee's Antique Carpets, Liangmaqiao Lu, close to 21st Century Hotel **When:** March 6, 2:30-4:30 pm **Admission:** 30 yuan **Tel:** 8462 2081

## The Song Sisters — China's Leading Ladies

One family, the Songs, produced the two most important political women of modern China. Both married major political figures — Song Qingling wed Sun Yat-sen, and her younger sister Song Meiling wed Chiang Kia-shek — and both had important careers of their own. This talk, by professor Diana Lary, a specialist in Republican China history, will focus on their extraordinary lives. Lary first worked in China in the mid-1960s and later served as the Cultural Attache at the Canadian Embassy. She is now the director of the Centre for Chinese Research at the University of British Columbia, Canada.

**Where:** The German Embassy, 17 Dongzhimenwai Dajie **When:** April 10, 7:30 pm **Tel:** 6512 4513

## Movies

## Mother Courage and Her Children

Directed by Bertolt Brecht. In this chronicle of the Thirty Years War, Mother Courage follows armies back and forth across Europe, selling provisions and liquor from her canteen wagon. One by one she loses her children to the war, but will not part with her livelihood - the wagon. German with English subtitles.

**Where:** small hall of the Goethe Institute, Weigongcunlu, Xikou, Haidian **When:** April 4, 6:30 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6841 7891



Marisa Ventura(right) and Christopher Marshall (left)

## Maid in Manhattan

Directed by Wayne Wang, starring Ralph Fiennes, Frances Conroy, Jennifer Lopez, Christopher Eigeman. Marisa Ventura, a housekeeper at the first-class Beresford Hotel in Manhattan, is a hard-working, intelligent and determined single mother who dreams of a better life for herself and her son, Ty. One day, Marisa brings Ty to the Beresford. When she is coaxed into trying some designer clothes by another maid, Ty appears at the door before Christopher Marshall, an aspiring senator and one of the city's most eligible bachelors. Christopher is immediately attracted to Marisa, and assuming she is a hotel guest, he asks her to join him for the day. But when he learns her real identity...

**Where:** local cinemas **When:** till April 10

## The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

Directed by Sergio Leone, starring Clint Eastwood, Eli Wallach, Lee Van Cleef Westwen. A taciturn, enigmatic loner searches for a cache of stolen gold against rivals the Bad, a ruthless bounty hunter, and the Ugly, a Mexican bandit. Italian with English subtitles.

**Where:** Italian Embassy Cultural Office **When:** April 10, 7 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 6532 2187



Conflict ends in friendship

## Let's Play, Dharma

Directed by Park Chul-kwan, starring Park Sin-yang, Park Sang-myun, Kang Seong-jin, Kim Soo-ro. A group of professional thugs get the short end of the stick and run for their lives finally hiding in a Buddhist temple. The monks are suddenly placed in a position where they have to live with the crooks. As they await the saving phone call of their boss, the goons become an annoying presence for the monks. They get a grant to stay at the temple, but then they also must train as monks. The monks and the thugs become gripped in a taut tug of war to see who wins. Korean with Chinese subtitles.

**Where:** Fifth floor Hyundai Millennium Tower, 38 Xiaoyunlu, Chaoyang **When:** April 11, 5:30 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 8453 8112



Tao Hong

## Live Show (Sheng Huo Xiu)

Directed by Huo Jianqi, starring Tao Hong, Tao Zeru, Pan Yueming. Restaurant owner Lai Shuangyang is one tough lady. After she gets divorced, she finds herself with more responsibility than she ever imagined. Her days include everything from running the restaurant and raising her chil-

dren, to winning the friendship of government officials. As the pressure builds, she has to decide which relationships are worth saving, and what parts of her life she needs to leave behind. Chinese with English subtitles.

**Where:** Cherry Lane Movies, 29 Liangmaqiao Lu **When:** April 4-5, 8 pm **Admission:** 40 yuan **Tel:** 6430 1398 **Email:** rex@cherrylanemovies.com.cn

## Jams

## Starting Point

Tonight foreign students from Beijing Language Culture University will give a concert, with music from around the world. On Saturday night, five bands will perform including AK47, Slap (*Erguang*), and Recycle.

**Where:** Starting Point, opposite the west gate of the Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Haidian **When:** April 5, 9 pm **Admission:** 20 yuan **Tel:** 8233 2264

## DJ Kentaro

Japanese DJ Kentaro, 2002 DMC (Digital Multimedia Circuit) World Champion will spin a mind-blowing set of hip-hop, funk, dub and raga.

**Where:** the Loft, 4 Gongti Beilu **When:** April 5, 10 pm **Admission:** 60, 80 yuan **Tel:** 6501 7501, 6400 4036

## Lucky Bands

On Saturday afternoon, AK-47, Tinned Liquid Oxygen (*Yeyang Guan-tou*), and Gala Equation will perform, followed by Tookoo, one of Beijing's hardest-core bands, at night. On April 8, bands including Zuoxiao Zuzhao, Tongue (*Shetou*), Cold Blooded Animal (*Lengxue Dongwu*), Yaska (*Ye Cha*), CMCB, Chen Lei, and Fall Insects (*Qiutian De Chongzi*) will take the stage in memory of Nirvana singer Kurt Cobain.

**Where:** Get Lucky, 500 meters east of the south gate of the University of International Business and Economics, Chaoyang **When:** 9:30 pm **Admission:** adults 40 yuan, students 30 yuan **Tel:** 6429 9109

## What at What

Tonight is hip-hop night with Xiao Lei. Check out punk rock on Saturday afternoon with Cotton Cloth (*Bu Yi*) and Perfume (*Xiang Shui*).

**Where:** What, opposite north gate of University of International Business and Economics, Chaoyang **When:** 9 pm **Admission:** 20 yuan **Tel:** 13910 209249

## Student's Night

Hip-hop, house, trance and other cool tunes with unlimited drinks and draft beer.

**Where:** Club Arena, South gate of Tsinghua University, Haidian **When:** April 5, 9 pm **Admission:** 40 yuan **Email:** psb@fourthring.com

## Parties

## Exhibition Opening Party

Live performances by guitarist Liu Qing and DJ Weng Weng will mark the opening of an exhibition of works by five contemporary Chinese artists, Liu Fen, Mo Gen, Qin Siyuan, Cang Xin, and Cui Xiuwen. The exhibition will run April 6-8.

**Where:** Yan Club, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang **When:** April 5, 8-11 pm **Admission:** 40 yuan (including one drink) **Tel:** 8457 3506

## Two Room Party

Two rooms with two themes. One has a body theme featuring DJs Levi, Shapeshifter, Kent, and Dr. Green. The other has a mind theme featuring DJ Usami playing a four-hour set of funky house and breaks.

**Where:** Club Banana, 22 Jiangguomenwai Dajie **When:** April 5, 9 pm **Admission:** free **Tel:** 13520 674284

## Stage

## Odd Couple

After an alarming accident, middle-aged Da Tong (acted by Zhou Zhou) realizes how fragile life can be. He decides to save his marriage, which, after many years, has become boring and passionless. Yet his well-intentioned move meets a cold response from his wife, (acted by Hei Mei), who is too busy to notice.

**Where:** Small Theatre of the Beijing People's Art Theatre, 22 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng **When:** April 4, 7:15 pm **Admission:** 80 yuan **Tel:** 800 8101887

## Henan Opera

On April 5-6, the Henan Opera Troupe will perform *Gully in Chaoyang* (*Chaoyang Gou*), and Xu Junxia, Yang Hongxia, Ma Lan and others will take the stage. On April 7-8, *Xianghui-nu* will be performed by Wang Quanzhen, Yang Hongxia, Meng Xiangli, Zhang Yueting and Zhang Lijuan. On

April 9-10, *Ah Q and Kong Yiji* will be performed by the Henan Qu Troupe.

**Where:** Grand Chang'an Theatre, Jianguomennei Dajie **When:** 7:30 pm **Admission:** 50-800 yuan **Tel:** 6406 8888



Love between human and snake

## The White Snake

Performed by winners of Plum Blossom Awards and disciples of master Mei Lanfang. Vocal solos and martial art fighting sequences are blended to great effect. The story features an unconventional love between a man and a white snake turned into a beautiful woman. Things get complicated when a monk who believes humans and demons should not mingle works to block their relationship.

**Where:** Poly Theater, Dongsishi-tiao **When:** April 5-7, 7:30 pm **Admission:** 120-800 yuan **Tel:** 800 810 1887

## Activities



Kaiser Kuo

## Rock Music in China

Kaiser Kuo, a founder of the Chinese rock group Tang Dynasty, is still active on the Beijing music scene as guitarist with the band Chun Qiu (Spring and Autumn), who will take the stage tomorrow night. Kuo will also talk about his experiences in and outlook on rock in China.

**Where:** CD Cafe, East Third Ring Road **When:** April 5, 8-10 pm **Admission:** 20 yuan **Tel:** 6501 8877 ext 3032

## Making Chinese Kites

Veteran folk artists will teach you how to make traditional kites in a magnificent hall decorated with a variety of kites. Kids get to make kites from the beginning, while adults will first learn about the history and different types of kites. A huge selection of kites will also be exhibited and available for purchase. English translation provided.

**Where:** Beijing Friendship Association with Foreign Countries, 97 Nanheyuan Jie **When:** April 5, 2:30-4:30 pm **Admission:** adults 40 yuan, kids 30 yuan (including materials) **Tel:** 8462 2081

## Employment

Richard, fluent English, high efficiency and rich experience as an English-Chinese and Chinese-English translator and interpreter for business, seeks a part-time or full-time job.

**Tel:** 13683 599446

**Email:** richardli123@hotmail.com

## Services



## Fashion Design

Beijing Sunny Wang Fashion Design Studio offers individualized fashion design.

**Where:** Taiyuanfang tea café, Nanlishilu or Madami bar, Wangfujing **When:** every weekend, or by appointment **Cost:** 999-3,999 yuan (including fabric) **Tel:** 13911 520083

We are glad to receive your feedback. We will print employment, language exchange and accommodation info for individuals. Feel free to email us at bjtodayinfo @ ynet.com or call 6590 2522  
By Guo Yuandan





Peach blossoms on the shores of Kunming Lake

Photos by Bobby

By Helen Hong

With the weather getting warmer by the day, outdoor weekend activities are again becoming an option for those disinclined to risk frostbite for the sake of a little fresh air.

The Summer Palace might not be an obvious choice to those for whom frostbite is only a marginally greater evil than throngs of tourists, but the throngs invariably head for the popular sites around the north bank of Kunming Lake and Longevity Hill. The west bank of the lake is picturesque and relatively crowd free.

There are five gates through which the general public can enter the Summer Palace. Most of the buses, and most of the throng, arrive at the North Palace Gate and the East Palace Gate.

Relatively few visitors enter by way of South Ruyi Gate, at the south east corner of the park. Turning left after coming through this gate will take you away from the main sights, toward the west bank, which takes in the two kilometers from Luoguo Bridge via Yudai Bridge to the North Ruyi Gate. The West Dyke, the long dyke that divides this part of Kunming Lake, is famous for its six bridges and ancient willows that line it.

The view to the east from the dyke is of the palaces and temples on Longevity Hill and along the lake's eastern shore; to the west can be seen forest and the solitary Yuquan Tower.

In the late 1980s and early '90s, it was popular in Beijing to talk of the "three phases" of courtship. New young lovers would meet for their first romantic trysts at Zhongshan Park. As the relationship intensified, the couple would progress to boating on Kunming Lake at the Summer Palace. The final phase was walking in the Fragrant Hills.

These days, elderly couples can be seen strolling during the daytime, while evenings are the preserve of young lovers. So much so that it is difficult to find a solitary visitor on the west bank.

Now is one of the best times of the year to visit the Summer Palace. Buds and shoots are just beginning to appear and bird life abounds. Meanwhile, the visiting throngs have not yet swelled to the volumes typical of summer.

# Secluded Heaven in the Summer Palace



Kunming Lake with Willow Bridge in the distance



## West bank sights

**The six bridges:** Built in imitation of the Sudi Dyke on Hangzhou's West Lake, the most famous of the bridges is the northernmost Yudai, or Jade Belt Bridge, so named because it is said to resemble a jade belt. The other five, from north to south, are Jiehu, Bifeng, Jing, Lian and Liu bridges.

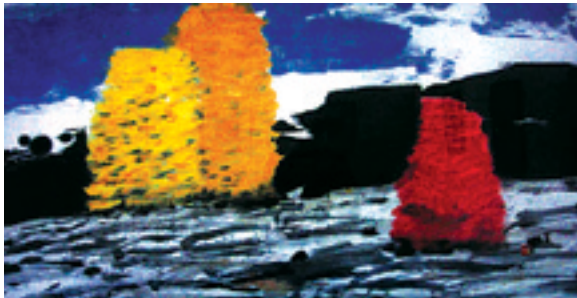
**The willows:** In spring, the west bank is lined with rows of green willows and pink peach blossoms.

**Getting there:** bus 374, 704 and 905 **Admission:** Peak season tickets (from April 1 to October 31), 30 yuan to get into the park, 50 yuan for an all-sites-inclusive ticket (not necessary if you are only visiting the west bank).



## MUSEUM WATCH

# Lao Jia Art Museum



Qiu Se by Lao Jia, 1997

Photo by Cui Hao

By Guo Yuandan

Lao Jia Art Museum (老甲艺术馆) is one of the very few private museums dedicated to the work of one artist.

Jia Haoyi, or Lao Jia, is an artist renowned for his paintings of horses. His work has been exhibited in Singapore, Switzerland, Germany, Romania, the USA, Canada, Hong Kong and Japan.

The museum is located in Huoying, a village to the north of Beijing, and has over 100 paintings by Lao Jia on permanent exhibition.

Lao Jia was born in a small village in Hebei. He has traveled widely in China, and visits to Sichuan, Inner Mongolia and Gansu provinces in the 1980s

have deeply influenced his work.

There is a strong tradition of horse painting in China. Xu Beihong, one of the pioneers of 20th century Chinese ink painting, especially excelling in this particular subject matter.

Though Lao Jia is undoubtedly influenced by Xu Beihong, his style is distinctly different to that of Xu, who first outlined the horse's physical form with careful calligraphic strokes, before splashing on ink to give the form texture and dimension.

It has been commented that while others use ink to depict horses, Lao Jia uses the horse's form to show the strength and intensity of his pen and ink. Lao Jia's horses are a dynamic symbol of power and might,

filled with tremendous vigor and energy, representing the power of the *yang* (male).

In addition, he has also simplified the application of ink. There are no variations in the intensity of shade or dryness. It is all dark shade and dry ink, which serves to intensify the weight of his strokes. After Xu Beihong, Lao Jia's horses have created another milestone in the history of Chinese painting.

**Where:** Lao Jia Art Museum, Huoying Village, Changping **Open:** weekends and holidays, 9:30 - 11:30 am **Admission:** free **Getting there:** Take the light rail (line 13) to Huoying, the museum is opposite Xindongfang Xuexiao (New Oriental School) **Tel:** 8170 2370

## WALL WALKS



Photos by Hua

# Xifengkou Gateway

By Lisa Huang

Located in Qianxi County, in the east of Hebei Province, Xifengkou (喜峰口) Gateway was an important stronghold west of Shanhaiguan Fort, the easternmost pass through the wall before it reaches the sea.

It is one of 32 passes built along the Yanshan Mountains between 1368 and 1398 under the supervision of Ming Dynasty general Xu Da. Successive emperors of the Ming Dynasty continued construction and reinforcement of this section of wall. In 1452, a 13-meter tower named Zhenyuan Lou (镇远楼), Pacifying the Frontier Tower was built, the remains of which can still be seen.

The name Xifengkou, which means "Peak of Happiness," derives from a legend surrounding the building of the wall. The story goes that a boy whose father had been conscripted into one of the many construction gangs sent to build the Great Wall, after waiting years for him to return, set off to find his father.

After countless travails, he eventually came to what is now known as Xifengkou, where he found his father, still working on the Great Wall. The two were so overjoyed to be reunited, they both promptly dropped dead. Sad but true - well, sad at least.

Xifengkou Gateway, surrounded by mountains on both sides, has been a place of strategic importance since ancient times. In 1933, invading Japanese troops failed to conquer the stronghold. The marks of bullets and artillery shells can still be made out in the sides of the wall.

Xifengkou Gateway lies near Panjiakou Reservoir (潘家口水库), one of the largest reservoirs in China. Some two kilometers of the Great Wall is now submerged by the reservoir, but on a sunny day, the submerged section can be clearly seen. During especially dry seasons, this section of wall is exposed to the air.

**Getting there:** Xifengkou is a 210-kilometer drive from Beijing. Take the Beijing-Shunyi road to Miyun, then head east along State Road 112 to Kuancheng (宽城) in Hebei. From there, the route to Xifengkou Gateway is clearly signposted.

